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# Wellness Matters

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## Your Healthy Body

# Protect Your Health: Stay Hydrated

There are many health benefits from drinking water, including weight loss and reduced fluid retention, but above all, the body simply cannot function without it.

How much water do you actually need to drink each day?

### No Easy Answers

The truth is, your water needs depend on many factors, including your health, how active you are, and where you live.

No single formula fits everyone, so knowing your body's needs is essential in helping to determine how much water you should be drinking each day to maintain optimal health and stay hydrated.

### Health Benefits of Water

Understanding how your body and health can benefit from water is the first step to determining how much water you need each day. Water is your body's principal chemical component, comprising, on average, 60 percent of your weight. Every system in your body depends on water. For example, water flushes toxins out of vital organs, carries nutrients to cells,

and provides a moist environment for ear, nose, and throat tissue. Lack of water can lead to fatigue, dizziness, cramping, and other symptoms of dehydration.



### Suggested Daily Intake

There are two recognized approaches to determine water needs for the average adult living in

a temperate climate:

- **Replacement:** this approach refers to replacing the normal amount of fluids you typically lose each day; on average, two liters of water or other healthy beverages should replace lost fluids.
- **Dietary recommendations:** adheres to basic dietary advice; on average, men should drink three liters of liquids (about 13 cups) while women should drink 2.2 liters (about 9 cups) daily.

Typically, if you drink enough to rarely feel thirsty and regularly produce colorless/slightly yellow urine, your fluid intake is most likely adequate.

### The Fluid of Choice

To avoid dehydration and ensure your body has enough fluids, make water your beverage of choice. Drink a glass during and between meals. Hydrate before, during, and after exercise; choose sparkling water instead of soda.

If concerned about your fluid intake, check with your doctor or a registered dietician to find the amount that is best for you.

## Vision Care

The sun releases energy, called radiation, in various forms: in sunlight, heat, and invisible ultraviolet (UV) rays. UV rays cause sunburn but also can damage your eyes and vision. So take these precautions to adequately protect your eyes:

- Your everyday eyewear should absorb UV rays.
- Use sunglasses that block 99 to 100 percent of both [UVA](#) and [UVB rays](#).
- A brimmed hat blocks about half of UV rays and limits rays that hit your eyes around sunglasses.

## Ticks & Tick-borne Diseases

Warmer weather means tick season, and each season seems to be worse and more widespread than the last due to milder winters and booming mice and deer populations. Unfortunately, with the projected increase of ticks, the threat of tick-borne disease, including the most common, Lyme disease, also increases.

The best way to avoid contracting a tick-borne disease is to practice proper preventive measures, which include the following:

- Wear light-colored clothing, including long-sleeved shirts and pants when in wooded areas, and tuck pant legs into socks or boots. Keep long hair tied back and wear a hat.
- Wash your body and clothing after all outdoor activities.
- Look periodically for ticks if you have been outdoors, especially if you have been in wooded areas or gardens.
- Remove ticks within 24 hours to greatly reduce the risk of contracting disease.
- Talk with your veterinarian about tick repellent for your pet.
- Check your pet's coat if it has been in a possible tick-infested area.



## Healthy & Delicious

### Healthy Eating 101

A well-balanced diet could help you live longer and reduce the chances of developing chronic diseases. Keep the following tips in mind when you get started on a healthy eating journey:

- 1) **Get a personalized eating plan.** Speak with your doctor to develop a plan that will give you the amounts of each food group you need daily. Your doctor may recommend you seek out a registered dietician or nutritionist to create the best plan for you.
- 2) **Set realistic goals.** You are more likely to succeed in reaching goals when you make changes gradually. Start with small changes.
- 3) **Balance your plate with a variety of foods.** Half of your plate should be filled with fruits and vegetables, 25 percent with lean meat, poultry or fish, and 25 percent with grains.
- 4) **Eat slowly.** It takes between 15-20 minutes for your brain to get the message that your body is getting food. When your brain gets this message, you may stop feeling hungry.
- 5) **Practice portion control.** Talk with your doctor or visit [www.webmd.com](http://www.webmd.com) to learn about portion sizes and daily food intake for your age, gender, and activity level.