



Healthy Habits

Tips and resources for living well



This Month: Stay Hydrated This Summer

The importance of hydration. Being well-hydrated is essential for good health. Consuming water is necessary to keep the body's systems functioning properly. This is especially important to remember during the summer months when we need to increase our fluid intake to counteract warmer temperatures and higher humidity. In this edition of Healthy Habits, we will discuss the strategies for staying hydrated, how to recognize the signs of dehydration, and recommendations for staying well-hydrated during exercise.

A fun, hydrating beverage: Cucumber Lime Refresher

Serve this thirst-quenching drink at your next gathering!

Ingredients:

- 1 pitcher of water
- 1 cucumber, sliced thinly
- The juice of 4-5 limes

Directions:

Add lime juice and cucumber slices to the pitcher of water. Stir to mix well. Refrigerate to chill or serve over ice.

Drink up!

Tips for staying hydrated

Hydration is vital to our overall health and well-being. In addition to helping the body function properly, water helps regulate body temperature and flush out waste. The following tips can help you stay hydrated:

- **Drink six to eight 8 oz. glasses of water each day.** This is a general recommendation that will change based on age, chronic conditions, and activity level, so check with your doctor for the specific amount that's right for you.
- **Bring a reusable water bottle to work** and drink from it throughout the day, refilling as needed.
- **Drink water during your meals.** Not only can it help you stay hydrated, but it can help you feel more full, which can help prevent you from overindulging at mealtime.

Not a huge fan of drinking plain water? Consider flavoring it with slices of citrus fruit or a splash of 100% fruit juice. Or, experiment with the water's temperature—see whether you like it better cold from the fridge, chilled over ice, or at room temperature.

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Know the signs

Avoid dehydration!

If you feel thirsty, your body needs fluids. It's a good idea to listen to your body and drink water throughout the day to avoid dehydration. Watch for these signs of mild dehydration:

- Feeling thirsty
- Headache or lightheadedness
- Fatigue or sleepiness (for children, being less active than usual)
- Less frequent urination or decreased urine output
- Dark yellow or amber-colored urine (urine that is clear or pale yellow indicates you are well-hydrated)
- Constipation
- Few or no tears when crying
- For infants, no wet diapers for three hours

Track your water intake!

During summer, you may need to drink more fluids to stay properly hydrated. Not sure how much water you're drinking, or whether you're drinking enough? Now is the perfect time to begin tracking your water intake.

In addition to tracking your water, you can also track your food intake, exercise, weight, sleep, and more. Tracking can help keep you motivated and allow you to see your areas for improvement and your progress over time.

Stay hydrated during exercise

Try these tips

When exercising in the summer heat, it's especially important to stay hydrated. You need to consume water to replace the fluids lost during physical activity. The amount of water needed will differ from person to person, depending on body size, sweat production, climate, and the type and intensity of exercise performed.

A good rule of thumb is to drink water before, during, and after exercise. Try these best practices for mild to moderate exercise:

- **20 to 30 minutes before exercise:** Drink at least 8 oz. of water
- **During exercise:** Consume 7-10 oz. of water every 10-20 minutes
- **Within 30 minutes after exercising:** Drink at least 8 oz. of water

QUIZ

1. **How many 8 oz. glasses of water is it recommended that you drink each day?**
 - a. 1 to 2
 - b. 4 to 5
 - c. 6 to 8
 - d. 10 to 12
2. **Which is a potential sign of dehydration?**
 - a. Thirst
 - b. Fatigue
 - c. Lightheadedness
 - d. All of the above
3. **True or false: A healthy way to flavor plain water is by pouring in a splash of soda.**
 - a. True
 - b. False

Answers: 1 c, 2 d,