

The Importance of Staying Hydrated Under average circumstances, the body loses and needs to replace approximately 2 to 3 quarts of water daily. All bodily functions, including breathing, cause water loss, which means that water needs to be replaced on a daily basis. When you are asleep, you lose as much or more water as when you are awake, and you need as much water in cold weather as in warm weather. Luckily, many of the foods we eat are composed primarily of water. Foods with particularly high-water content include greens and most fruits and vegetables. Caffeinated beverages such as soft drinks, tea, and coffee also count, in part, toward our daily fluid intake. Though they do not 'dehydrate' you, they can promote increased urination, so they should not be the primary nonfood source of liquids during your day. The best source of hydration is probably water, or drinks that are primarily water, such as sport replacement drinks, herbal teas, lemon water, and vegetable broth.

### Ten Tips for Increasing Your Fluid Intake

1. Have a glass of water or juice on arising in the morning.
2. Drink constantly throughout the day, rather than several 'big gulps' at once—this meets your body's needs and may prevent the problem of frequent urination.
3. If you have problems with constipation, it may be due to not drinking enough water—our bodies need water to balance the fiber intake that comes from fruits, vegetables, and grains.
4. Fluids are more easily absorbed from the body when they are somewhat cooler, about 40-60 degrees. Keep a one- or two-quart bottle of water in your refrigerator, and make sure

you drink and refill it daily.

5. When you pass a drinking fountain, stop for a refreshing drink.
6. Use the color of your urine as a guide for how well you are hydrated. If you urinate regularly and your urine is light yellow, you are drinking enough. If it is dark yellow, increase your fluid intake.
7. Carry a water bottle with you and drink regularly between meals.
8. Allergy sufferers and persons taking any medication should try to attain the fluid goals outlined above. Our kidneys and liver need extra water to process medicines.
9. When exercising, drink one to two cups of fluid 30 minutes before and half to one-cup fluid every 15 minutes of exercise.
10. Drink before you get thirsty. Thirst is actually a sign that your body is already dehydrated. Keep drinking regularly throughout the day even after your thirst is quenched.

**Make water part of your daily routine for good health!**

Sources: Hall Health Center-UW Medicine