

Water, water, everywhere! Drink it for summer hydration

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Hydration is a key component in our health that is often overlooked. In the heat of summer, when there are exceptionally high temperatures, proper hydration is crucial. Water is imperative for good health and plays important roles in keeping the body healthy, including flushing out waste products, regulating body temperature and preventing constipation among other things.

Since the human body is made up of about 60 percent water, the amount of water each person needs will vary. Factors in that variation may depend on their health, amount of physical activity they get and their geographic location. According to the Institute of Medicine, the adequate intake for healthy men is roughly 13 cups or 3 liters of fluid per day. Intake for healthy women is about 9 cups or 2.2 liters of fluids per day. When participating in intense exercise that last more than an hour, or when enduring heat during which excessive perspiration occurs, it is necessary to replenish fluids and electrolytes.

Electrolytes are minerals needed to keep the body properly hydrated and are often lost in sweat. Drinks such as Gatorade and Powerade provide additional electrolytes to replace fluids lost by excessive sweat or intense exercise. Be sure to choose the Powerade Zero or Gatorade G2 for lower calories, sugar and carbohydrates. Although tea, milk, juice and coffee are primarily composed of water and can contribute to total fluid consumed for the day, water is — and always will be — the best choice for hydration.

Tips to consume more water:

- Keep a glass of water beside your bed to drink upon waking up.
- Take a sip from every water fountain you pass by.

- Have a water bottle on your desk to drink throughout the day.
- Take a bottle of water while running errands. Drink water before, during and after exercise.
- Add fresh fruit to water for a hint of flavor.
- Drink one cup of water before and after each meal.

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