

AUGUST WELLNESS:

HYDRATION



Did you know that water makes up 50% - 75% of our body weight? Water helps our bodies run smoothly. It assists every cell, tissue and organ in the body, and is needed for bodily functions such as: perspiration, urination, bowel movements, temperature control, joint cushioning and tissue protection.

Staying hydrated is important because we lose water through everyday activities, such as breathing, urination, bowel movements and perspiration. In addition to these everyday activities, additional fluids are needed for things such as: exercise, environmental factors (such as heat, humidity and high altitudes), some health issues (such as fevers, vomiting or diarrhea) and during pregnancy and breast-feeding.

What is the best way to stay hydrated? Drinking water and other fluids make up about 80% of hydration. Water is a great choice, and drinks such as milk, juice and herbal teas also can assist in hydration. Just be careful of drinks which may contain too much sugar (such as soda, some sports drinks, some juices, etc)

The other 20% of hydration may come from foods that are water-rich, such as watermelon, lettuce and cucumbers. For a list of some additional foods that hydrate, click here:

[19 Water-Rich Foods That Help You Stay Hydrated](#)

Is the common recommendation of *8 glasses of water a day* the magic number? That depends. It may be the right amount; however, some people do need more or less water. This amount can vary depending on some of the factors mentioned above, such as: energy output and sweating during exercise, heat, humidity, altitude, pregnancy, fever, vomiting, diarrhea, and health conditions such as bladder infections and urinary tract stones; as well as other individual health issues.

It should be noted that although very rare, it is possible to drink too much water. With too much water, a dangerous situation is caused because the kidneys can not get rid of the excess water.

To find out the fluid intake that is necessary for your individual needs, it is important to talk with your doctor, nutritionist or dietitian in order to take any specific factors into consideration.

For general information on water intake, hydration and the health benefits of water, click here:

[Water Intake Information from the Mayo Clinic](#)