

How Much Water Should I Drink?

How much water should I drink?

Although fluid needs can be very different between individuals, a general rule of thumb is:

Drink six to eight 8-ounce glasses of water each day

What causes dehydration (loss of water in our body)?

- Vomiting or spitting up
- Having diarrhea
- Sweating
- Drinking alcohol
- Breathing fast or panting
- Having a high fever
- Drinking caffeinated beverages (soda, coffee, tea)

Source: Mayo Clinic. (2008). *Water: How much should you drink every day?* Available online at <http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/water/NU00283>

Am I Drinking Enough Water Every Day?

What happens if I don't drink enough water? (What are the signs of dehydration?)

- Increased thirst
- Dry, itchy, and/or saggy skin
- Headache, weakness, or lightheadedness
- Dry mouth
- Dark urine
- Constipation
- Trouble staying cool or keeping warm



How can I make sure I am getting enough water during the day?



- Start and end your day with a glass of water.
- Do not substitute coffee, tea, or soda for water— they contain caffeine that causes dehydration.
- Drink water before and during meals.
- Carry a water bottle wherever you go.
- While exercising, drink water every 15 minutes.
- Freeze a bottle overnight so you will have cold water all day.
- Get some of your water supply from such foods as watermelon, cantaloupe, grapes, oranges, cucumbers, lettuce, and celery.

Bottled or Tap Water?

Which one should I drink: bottled or tap water?

Choosing one type of water over another is a personal choice.



Bottled water

- Bottled water is not necessarily cleaner or safer than most tap water
- Quality regulated by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration
- Sometimes tastes better than tap water
- More expensive than tap water
- Do not reuse bottled water containers—they cannot hold up to repeated use and washings; even the heat from the dishwasher will start damaging such containers.
- Does not contain fluoride, which promotes strong teeth and prevents tooth decay.

Tap water

- Water coming from a tap is safe for human and animal consumption unless labeled as nonpotable.
- Quality is regulated by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).
- Contains fluoride, which promotes strong teeth and prevents tooth decay.
- If you do not mind drinking tap water and want to use the same water container multiple times, sports bottles made of heavier plastic with wider mouths can be cleaned and reused.



Source: Bullers, A.C. (2002, July-August). Bottled water: Better than the tap? *FDA Consumer Magazine*, 36(4), 14–18.

Participant Game: Am I Drinking Enough Water Every Day?



1. Can alcohol cause dehydration? Yes No
2. How many 8-ounce glasses of water should you drink each day?
 A. 1–2 glasses B. 3–4 glasses C. 5–7 glasses D. 6–8 glasses
3. Circle the drink that does not have caffeine.
 A. Coffee B. Orange juice C. Tea D. Soda/cola



4. From the following choices, what is the best beverage to satisfy your water needs?
 A. Tea B. Diet soda C. Beer D. Water



5. How often should you drink water during exercise?
 A. Only after exercise
 B. Every hour
 C. Every 15 minutes
 D. Every 30 minutes



6. I can get dehydrated by:
 A. Vomiting or spitting up B. Having a high fever
 C. Sweating D. Having diarrhea
 E. Breathing fast or panting F. All of the above



Answers:

1. Yes 2. D 3. B 4. D 5. C 6. F