University Medical Center

Stay Healthy Newsletter

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Stay Hydrated for Good Health!

The human body is made up of approximately 60% water. Water is crucial in keeping your body functioning at its best level as it rids your organs of toxins and carries nutrients to your cells. A person can survive from 4-6 weeks without food, but will only last between 24-72 hours without water. Even mild forms of water deprivation will affect your energy level and body’s reactions.

How Much Do You Need?

How much water you need depends on a number of factors, including how active you are, the climate in which you live and your size. The average man, living in a temperate environment needs about 3 liters (13 glasses) of water or liquid per day; the average woman in the same environment needs 2.2 liters (9 cups) of beverages per day. All liquids are not created equal, in that some beverages that have caffeine, such as coffee or tea, deplete the body of water instead of refilling it and energizing it. Factors that require a greater intake per day than the average include exercise, hot weather, or illness.

Water and Weight Loss

Studies have shown that drinking water before each meal can help with weight loss. Water drinkers, who are dieting, lose on average 15.5 more pounds than their non-water drinking counterparts. Water is a non-caloric way to fill you up without fattening you up. Many weight loss plans, require a certain amount of daily water intake to facilitate weight loss.

Eat Your Water!

Foods that you eat also contain water and can be counted as providing liquid for ample hydration. For example, fruits and vegetables are often made up of at least 90% water. Want to eat even more of your fill of water-filled foods? Watermelon has 93% water. You can use it in recipes to add instant hydration, or freeze it and then blend it for a delicious, refreshing watermelon smoothie. Cucumbers and iceberg lettuce have the highest water content of any vegetable at a whopping 96% water. The next time you want to add water but are tired of drinking it straight, consider having a single serving of salad.

You can also drink certain bottled waters that have added vitamins and/or minerals to balance your electrolytes and give your body a boost; however, for hydration, plain old tap water will do the trick.