

# Drinks for Hydration

You might think you're all muscle but about two-thirds of your body is made up of water.

Water helps keep your body's temperature stable, it carries nutrients and oxygen to cells, cushions joints, protects organs and tissues and removes wastes. You lose water from your body through sweating, breathing, urine and faeces.

Being properly hydrated helps your body function at its best. Dehydration – not having enough fluid in your body – can cause headaches, fatigue, crankiness and poor concentration. It also affects your sports performance.

To stay properly hydrated, you need to give your body a certain amount of fluids every day. This includes water, milk and other drinks.

## Recommended daily intake of water:

Age	Males	Females
9 - 13	1.6L/day = 6 glasses	1.4L/day = 5 to 6 glasses
14 - 18	1.9L/day = 7 glasses	1.6L/day = 6 glasses
Adults	2.6L/day = 10 glasses	2.1L/day = 8 glasses

You need to drink more on hot days or if you're exercising. Make sure you drink plenty of water before, during and after physical activity to put back what you lose through sweat. We often don't feel thirsty even when we're dehydrated, so it's a good idea to drink water regularly even if you aren't thirsty.

Water and low fat milk are the best drinks for you. They quench your thirst without giving you all the sugar and additives found in fruit drinks and juices, soft drinks, sports drinks and flavoured mineral waters.

Here's a fact: a 250ml glass of apple juice or cola contains the equivalent of six teaspoons of sugar. Drinking just one can of soft drink every day adds up to 18 kilograms of sugar in a year!

Drinking water also helps rinse your mouth and prevent tooth decay. Most tap water contains fluoride which helps develop strong teeth. On top of that, tap water is inexpensive compared to all other drinks.

Sports drinks which contain electrolytes have been shown to have benefits when you exercise for more than one hour. Sports Medicine Australia says that while water replaces lost fluids, sports drinks (containing 4% - 8% carbohydrate and small amounts of electrolytes) also provide additional energy and salts. Flavoured drinks, such as sports drinks and low concentration cordial, may encourage more fluid consumption than plain water because of their taste and sodium content.