

HYDRATION

HYDRATION RECOMMENDATIONS

How much water should you drink? We've all heard the general recommendation to drink eight cups of water daily; however, your fluid needs vary based on different factors, including your health, activity level, and the climate where you live. According to the Institute of Medicine, an adequate daily fluid intake is approximately 13 cups (3 liters) for men and 9 cups (2.2 liters) for women who live in a temperate climate.

Water is necessary for your survival and makes up the largest percentage of your body weight. Water helps to flush toxins from the body, carries nutrients to cells, and provides a healthy environment for body tissues to assist in immune function.

SYMPTOMS OF DEHYDRATION

Each day, you lose water through your breath, perspiration, urine, and bowel movements. When the amount of water lost exceeds the amount you consume, dehydration occurs. Symptoms of dehydration include:

- Dry mouth
- Increased thirst
- Dark-colored urine
- Dizziness
- Fatigue

If you are very active and engage in long-duration exercise during which you perspire heavily, you should replenish your water losses. A general recommendation is to drink 16 ounces of water or fluid for every pound of weight lost during one exercise session.

You may have heard about the connection between electrolytes and dehydration. Electrolytes are minerals in your blood and body fluids that carry an electric charge. Having balanced electrolytes is vital for maintaining blood pH, muscle action, and other body processes. Electrolytes include acids, bases, and salts, such as sodium, calcium, potassium, chlorine, magnesium, and bicarbonate.



FLUID REPLENISHMENT

We replenish fluid losses by consuming foods and beverages that contain water.

Tips to help you stay hydrated:

- Eat fluid-rich fruits and vegetables, such as cucumber, leafy greens, melon, and citrus fruits; in addition, fruits and vegetables are a good source of potassium, which can help to replenish electrolytes
- Drink a glass of water as soon as you wake up in the morning
- Keep a water bottle with you to drink during the day
- Set reminders to drink water throughout the day
- Add fruit to flavor your water
- Replenish the fluid lost during long-duration exercise
- Track your fluid intake to ensure you meet your goal



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

For support from a registered nurse or wellness coach or to ask questions, please call a Blues On CallSM health coach at **1-888-BLUE-428**.

Log in to the member website listed on the back of your member ID card.

- Click on the **Wellness** tab.
- Click on **Additional Resources** on the left.
- Click on **Health Topics** under **WebMD health information** to search health topics or use the medical encyclopedia to review health issues you want to know more about.

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