

# Staying Hydrated

Water makes up about 60% of our bodies' weight. Water is a major component of blood and cells. Fluid flushes toxins out of inner organs, transports nutrients, and moistens our inner ears, nose and throat. We constantly lose fluid through our breath, sweat, urine and bowel movements.

Replacing fluid is important to avoid becoming dehydrated. Dehydration occurs when we do not have enough fluid to perform normal functions. Dehydration can usually be treated with an increase in fluid intake. Consuming an average of 9-12 cups of fluid a day will help to maintain your hydration. That includes what you drink AND what you eat. During the summer months it is important to get enough fluid.

Don't wait until you are thirsty to drink water. Thirst is usually a sign that you are already dehydrated. Instead, drink water with each meal, hydrate before, during and after exercise, and avoid alcohol and caffeine.

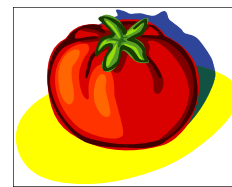
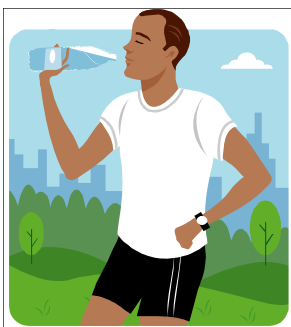
Electrolytes regulate normal volume of fluid in the cells, your blood pH, muscle action and other important processes. Dehydration can lead to electrolyte imbalances. Examples of electrolytes are sodium, potassium, calcium, magnesium, chloride and phosphate. Eating a healthy well balanced diet can help to keep your electrolytes in check.

## Signs of Dehydration

- Dizziness
- Thirst
- Fatigue
- Headache
- Dry Mouth
- Little or no urination
- Muscle weakness
- Lightheadedness

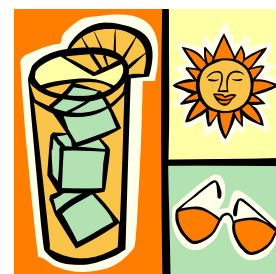
## Causes of dehydration

- Acute diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Fever
- Excessive sweating
- Humid weather
- Being at a high altitude



Eat foods that are *juicy* and help contribute to your overall fluid intake.

- Watermelon, cucumbers, peaches, pineapple, tomatoes, and grapes are all juicy foods.
- Consuming sports drinks with electrolytes can also keep you well hydrated on a hot summer day. Watch out for those extra calories!
- Avoid caffeinated beverages and drinks containing alcohol.





# Am I Hydrated? Urine Color Chart



This urine color chart is a simple tool you can use to assess if you are drinking enough fluids throughout day to stay hydrated.

If your urine matches the colors numbered **1, 2, or 3 you are hydrated.**

If your urine matches the colors numbered **4 through 8 you are dehydrated** and need to drink for more fluid.

**Be Aware!** If you are taking single vitamin supplements or a multivitamin supplement, some of the vitamins in the supplements can change the color of your urine for a few hours, making it bright yellow or discolored.

If you are taking a vitamin supplement, you may need to check your hydration status using another tool like Handout #15: Hydration Check: Body Weight Log.