

Are You Drinking Enough Water?

Every part of your body, from cells to skin to organs, needs water to work properly. How much water you should drink each day depends a lot on your level of activity, your overall health, the weather (hot & humid), and whether you're pregnant or breast-feeding. You lose water throughout the day when you breathe, sweat, pee, or poo. When dehydrated, you may feel tired or have difficulty focusing. Dehydration also concentrates your urine, which can irritate the lining of your bladder, isn't great for your kidneys, and can make you constipated. With 20% of your daily fluid intake coming from food, and 80% from drinks, the generally accepted recommendations for daily fluid intake are:

- About 15.5 cups (3.7 liters) of fluids per day for men (3 cups food, 12 cups drink)
- About 11.5 cups (2.7 liters) of fluids per day for women (2.5 cups food, 9 cups drink)

What about moms or moms-to-be?

Women who are pregnant should have about 10 cups (2.4L) of fluids or more. With the pressure of the baby pressing on the bladder, it's not uncommon to go to the bathroom more often – but this doesn't mean you should drink less water! Women who are breast-feeding may find that they often feel thirsty. This is normal. Try to have about 13 cups (3.1L) of fluids daily.

Your body will tell you what it needs – and not just through thirst. Oftentimes when you're hungry, you may just need some additional fluids, so try to hydrate first. You can also use a Urine Hydration Chart as a guide to determine whether you need to consume more fluids. Check it out down below – and happy hydrating!

DR. J

A Handy Tool

Use this urine color chart to match your urine color and figure out if you are drinking enough fluids throughout the day to keep yourself hydrated and your bladder happy! Cut it out to keep in your wallet, or take a picture to have handy on your phone, or simply keep a printout in the bathroom.

Notice that colors 4 through 8 mean you are dehydrated and need more fluid. With dehydration, you may also notice a stronger smell to your urine.

If you ARE drinking enough water, remember that vitamin supplements, like B2 (a.k.a. riboflavin), can change the color of your urine for a few hours, making it discolored or bright yellow, and some foods, like asparagus, can cause your urine to smell different.

