

# Hydration Education!

*The heat of the summer has arrived in full swing and it is now more important than ever to drink lots of liquids and stay hydrated to keep our body healthy and functional!*

## **Water is the building block of life!**

Almost 60% of the human body is made up of water and all organ systems rely on water to keep working properly. Making sure that the body is hydrated also helps reduce stress on the heart and helps to pump blood more easily through blood vessels, organs and muscles while also managing a more healthy blood pressure.

## **Avoid Dehydration**

It is normal to lose some water from sweating, breathing, and going to the bathroom. Dehydration occurs when the body is not getting as much water as it needs and without enough water the body does not function as well as it should. Dehydration can be mild, moderate or severe which can be seen through some signs/symptoms.



***Remember if you are thirsty – you are already dehydrated!***

### **Signs/Symptoms**

#### **Mild/Moderate Dehydration**

- Thirst
- Dry or sticky mouth
- Low urine amount and dark yellow color
- Dry, cool skin
- Headache(s)
- Muscle cramp(s)

#### **Severe Dehydration**

- Extremely low urination and very dark yellow color
- Very dry skin
- Dizziness
- Rapid heartbeat
- Rapid breathing
- Lack of energy, confusion, fainting

### **How Much Water?**

It is recommended to drink an average of **2-3 litres** or **6-8 cups water per day**.

Even more water is recommended if you live in a **hot climate** and staying **physically active!**

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## Healthy Sources for Hydration

Most people will choose water as the best drink to stay hydrated. Although water is great, other sources of water may include fruits and vegetables which also have a high water content. Watermelon, celery, cucumbers, strawberries and lettuce are all foods made of up to 90% water.

Refreshing sport drinks with sodium, sugar and electrolytes such as Gatorade may be useful if doing vigorous, high intensity exercise in hot temperatures but they usually have a high calorie content from the added sugars and artificial flavors.



If sugar is not your thing and you are trying to watch your carbohydrates - then try coconut water! Unlike the sport drinks, coconut water is usually low in sugar with a unique blend of vitamins and electrolytes like potassium making it a suitable, healthy alternative to sport drinks like Gatorade. Just remember to always read your food labels and watch out for extra added sugars and artificial sweeteners that are sometimes added into the processed coconut water.

Last but not least, our favorite caffeinated drinks such as tea and coffee have long been rumored to have dehydrating properties. Coffee lovers can rejoice as this myth has been put to rest many, many years ago. Although it is true that tea and coffee have mild diuretic properties and will make you run to the bathroom a little more often by making the body lose fluids faster – but anything with water in it will have a strong hydrating effect for the body. The recommended daily limit for coffee is 2-3 cups (250mL cup size) and 3-4 cups for black tea, so they should not be the only source of liquid for healthy hydration.