



Water – the forgotten part of the diet

Probably you have heard more than once that water is important. Today we have many other beverages such as soda pop, fruit juice, fruit drinks, milk, flavored milk, sports drinks, tea and coffee. Is water really important or can these other drinks take the place of water?

Our body loses from 8 to 12 cups of fluids everyday. We lose more if we are very physically active or if it is very hot. That fluid loss needs to be replaced. What is the best way to do that?

Do we get enough liquids?

There are some studies that indicate that many Americans don't get enough fluids. This may be more of a problem as we age. Sometimes we don't think we are thirsty, but we need to drink fluid anyway. By the time we are thirsty we may already be partially dehydrated.

Is water the only beverage we need?

Yes, water is the only beverage we need along with a healthy balanced diet of food. It was only after World War II that we started drinking soda pop and heavily sweetened tea and coffee.



Why is water better than other beverages?

Water has no calories, salt or sugar. Most other beverages do. Dependence on high sugar beverages such as soda pop is thought

to be a contributing factor to the growing obesity problem in this country.

Does too little liquid harm the kidneys?

Yes, drinking more liquids is associated with a lower risk of kidney stones in many studies.

Do we really need eight glasses of water a day?

It varies. Some people need more than eight glasses and some may need a little less. The more physically active you are and the more time you spend in the heat the more fluids you probably need. Water is the best fluid.



What about milk?

Fat-free and low-fat milk is a good source of fluids and also provides nutrients like calcium, magnesium, potassium and vitamin D. The current recommendation is 3 8-ounce glasses a day.

How about fruit juice?

Fruit juices are a source of some nutrients as well as water. It is recommended to drink no more than 4 to 6 ounces of juice a day. Whole fruit also has water and in addition has fiber so is a better choice to meet the recommended 2 to 2-½ cups of fruit a day.



Coffee and tea?

Coffee and tea certainly provide fluid, but the effects of caffeine are not completely known. Limit your consumption of coffee and tea.

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Rainbow Fruit Salad

Fruits are 80 to 90 percent water so are an excellent source of fluids in the diet.

- ½ medium cantaloupe, peeled and cubed
- 1 cup halved fresh strawberries
- 1 cup halved green grapes
- 1 medium apple chopped
- 1 6-ounce container of low-fat sugar-free fruit flavored yogurt

Combine the fruit. Add the yogurt, toss to coat. Cover and chill until ready to serve. Serves 6.

Nutrition information per serving:
60 calories, 0 g fat, 0 mg cholesterol, 30 mg sodium, 14 g carbohydrate, 35% RDA vitamin A, 60% RDA vitamin C.

