

Get the Water Facts

Who? Everyone

What? We all need water to stay alive. In fact, humans can only live about a week without water.

Where? Water is essential to every part of our bodies. Our bodies are 65-70% water. Our brains are 75% water, our blood is 82%, our bones are 25%, and our skin is 70%.

When? We need to take in at least 2 liters (or 2 1/2 quarts) of water a day - that's eight 8-ounce glasses - from beverages and from the foods we eat. We need to drink extra water before, during and after exercising.

Why? We lose about two liters of water everyday from going to the bathroom, sweating, crying and breathing. Water performs essential body functions:

- circulates food, oxygen, and nerve and muscle transmissions
- lubricates joints
- regulates body temperature
- transports waste
- protects body organs like the heart, brain, lungs, and eyes.
- aids digestion and allows your metabolism to work at full capacity

Water also:

- Makes exercise more effective. It can increase endurance by promoting the storage of glycogen, a type of carbohydrate stored in muscles that is used as energy when exercising.
- Helps in maintaining or losing weight by making you feel full so you do not overeat. When even slightly dehydrated, your body may think it wants to eat, when all it really needs is water.
- Has been proven by research to play an active role in reducing the risk of diseases such as kidney stones, urinary tract cancer, bladder cancer and possibly even colon cancer.
- Can also be considered a weapon in fighting colds and coughs. By staying hydrated, cold viruses get trapped in the mucus lining of the throat, and water also aids in soothing coughs.
- Contains fluoride for help in fighting cavities.
- Helps you avoid heat-related illnesses like heatstroke and heat exhaustion.
- Helps prevent wrinkles by keeping skin hydrated and supple.

How? We not only get water from drinking but also from the foods we eat. Fruits and vegetables are especially high in water content. Tomatoes are 95% water, watermelon is 93%, potatoes are 80%, and lettuce is 96%.

Caffeinated and alcoholic drinks should not be counted in your daily intake because they cause the body to lose extra water. To increase your daily water intake, try

drinking small amounts of water throughout the day; always keep a water bottle filled with tap water nearby.

Other Important Water Facts

- Only about 2% of the water used in homes is for drinking purposes.
- 1/3 of bottled water in US is just tap water with fluoride and/or chlorine removed.
- Tap water is strictly regulated by the EPA; bottled water is regulated by less strict FDA standards.
- Des Moines Water Works softens water to make water better for cleaning. Soft water gets your clothes, dishes, and hair cleaner.
- Home water filter systems may actually remove valuable nutrients found in tap water, as well as trace amounts of chemicals that are vital for keeping your water clean and safe.
- Bottled water costs 240-1,000 times more than tap water.
- You can fill a water bottle with tap water about 37 times for a penny!
- Do not use the hot water tap when cooking. Lead from lead solder in older home plumbing can dissolve more easily in hot water.
- It is not a good idea to drink from garden hoses because the plastic that makes it pliable may get into the water. Hose openings can also be covered with germs.
- We use more water in the bathroom than any other room of the house, and the most water is used for flushing the toilet.
- The average family turns on a faucet 70 times each day.
- On average, 84% of water used in homes goes down the drain.
- Only 3% of the earth's water supply is fresh water and 2% of that is frozen in glaciers and unavailable for our use.