

Healthy Hydration

Especially in the summer, it is certainly more tempting to sip on iced coffee, pop or juice instead of plain ol' water. With the hot weather and an increase in outdoor activities it is easy to become dehydrated in the summer. But what's really in those "appealing" beverages that are replacing water?



First Things First

Water is by far the best fluid to choose to keep your body hydrated. Water is the second most important nutrient in the body next to oxygen. Water helps transport nutrients to, and waste products from, body cells. During exercise, water is crucial for energy production. It also regulates body temperature and keeps our skin looking young. So drink up!

How Much Water do we Need?

On average, a person should drink eight 8-ounce glasses every day. That's about 2 quarts. However, it is important to keep in mind that water requirements can vary from one person to another and depend on several factors: physical activity, ambient temperature, health status (fever, diarrhoea, bleeding injury), physiological condition (pregnancy, lactation), age and gender, among other things.

Hydration and Physical Activity

For regular exercisers maintaining a constant supply of water in the body is essential to performance. Dehydration leads to muscle fatigue and loss of coordination. The body is unable to cool itself efficiently, leading to heat exhaustion and possibly heat stroke. Without an adequate supply of water the body will lack energy and muscles may develop cramps. To prevent dehydration, exercisers must drink before, during and after the workout.



When to Drink (cool water)	How much
30 minutes before physical activity	250-400mL (8-13 ounces)
During physical activity, every 15-20 min	90-250 mL (3-8 ounces)
After physical activity	500 mL (16 ounces) for every ½ kg (1 lb) lost during physical activity (drink gradually)

Middlesex London Health Unit

What about Other Fluids?

Soft drinks, sports drinks, energy drinks and alcoholic beverages can add a significant amount of calories to your diet and don't count as a serving of water. In fact, some of these drinks may contain caffeine or sodium and which can cause dehydration. One cup of juice or a tea can contribute to one serving of water per day, but it should be 100% natural juice, otherwise it is likely full of sugar. Nutritionists advise not to sip juice throughout the day, because natural fruit juice has high sugar content. A glass of fruit juice is a great way to start the day. After that, go for fresh fruit instead.

Beverage (8 fl. oz)	Calories	Total Fat (g)	Saturated Fat (g)	Cholesterol (mg)	Sodium (mg)	Carbs (g)	Sugars (g)	Protein (g)
100% Orange Juice, Tropicana	110	0	0	0	15	27	22	2
Iced Coffee, McDonald's	132	5.2	3.3	19	40	21.2	21.2	0.9
Coca-Cola	90	0	0	0	31	25	25	0
Water	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Bottom Line: Prioritize Water!

Water has no calories and is to be privileged as the first source of hydration when you want to manage your weight.

In addition, preliminary research among overweight adults who are dieting as part of a healthy lifestyle, suggests that drinking water as the first source of hydration would result in weight loss. An over-consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages can lead to excessive calorie intake and risk for obesity. It's okay to drink summer specialty beverages in moderation, but make sure you have had adequate water before doing so!

Resource: <http://www.calorieking.com>, <http://www.nestle-waters.com/>