

Fit & Lean in 2014

4.8: The Importance of Hydration

You've heard it before – it is important to ensure you are drinking at least 8 glasses of water a day for good health. If you are physically active, you will need to consume even more water than this. Why?

Lean muscle in the human body is made up of around 80% water and it needs that water to function properly. When you start to become dehydrated, your muscle tissue starts to lose water and it makes it harder for that muscle to contract effectively, reducing your strength and endurance.

Always have a water bottle with you when exercising and make sure to drink throughout your workout.

Not crazy about plain ol' water? Here are some tips for how to stay hydrated:

- Fruits & vegetables are an excellent source of water. Watermelon and lettuce both contain upwards of 90% water!
- Other beverages that also count towards hydration: milk, juice (reduce sugar content by diluting with water), coffee & tea (again – watch the sugar!)
- Alcohol is a huge dehydrator – you should limit your intake but when you choose to indulge, remember to use a 1-1 ratio of alcohol to water.
- Don't care for the taste of water? Try adding orange, lemon or cucumber to your water to add flavour. Miss the carbonation of soft drinks? Try seltzer water with lemon!

