Water

coming soon
from a tap near you
Are you drinking 6-8 glasses a day?

Most of us do not drink enough water. It is recommended that adults should drink at least 6-8 glasses of water a day and more in hot weather or when performing exercise.*

Water for your health

If you do not drink enough fluids you will become dehydrated. Mild dehydration often begins before you feel the sensation of thirst and so water should be drunk at regular intervals whether you feel thirsty or not. Many of the fluids that people often drink during the day contain high levels of sugar, artificial additives, caffeine and other diuretics. Drinking the recommended daily amount of clear, fresh, cool water can assist in the prevention of a range of health problems and help you to:

- Stay fit and healthy.
- Concentrate better.
- Avoid headaches.
- Have healthier skin and fresher breath.
- Prevent bladder and bowel problems.
- Protect your teeth from tooth decay.
- Sleep well at night and help you to relax.
- Feel less tired, less irritable and have more energy.
- Perform better at sports or exercise.

How to detect dehydration

Keep a check on your urine as a general guide to dehydration. It should be pale in colour, odourless and a plentiful flow. Urine which is yellow, dark, cloudy and smelly urine may indicate that you are dehydrated.

*This may not apply in cases of certain kinds of bladder and kidney difficulties.
Drinking 6-8 glasses each day

The lungs require around two glasses of water each day to function properly and your skin, the covering on the whole body, uses water every day through perspiration. Kidneys, which are the most important organs in the body’s elimination system, utilise a large quantity of water every day to carry out waste.

If you find it difficult to think about consuming the recommended daily allowance of water, here are a few ideas to make the adjustment easier.

- Each day for a week, try replacing one of your drinks with a glass of water. On the second week, replace two beverages with water and so on, until you are drinking 8 glasses of water each day.
- Carry a bottle filled with chilled tap water with you whenever you leave the house.
- Fill up a two litre bottle with fresh, cool water in the morning and attempt to finish it by early evening.
- Try to drink a glass of water before and during each meal.
- Drink a glass of cool water when you get up in the morning.
  - Take the time to drink water between meals, keep a glass beside you all the time.
  - Ask for a jug of iced tap water with your meal when in restaurants and with your alcohol when in bars – good establishments will be happy to provide this.
  - Why not ask for a glass of tap water to go with your coffee and tea in cafés.
It is important to drink enough water, especially when:

- It is hot.
- Exercising or performing manual tasks.
- Driving for longer periods.
- You fly in aircraft.
- Drinking alcohol.
- You are elderly.
- You are ill or in care.

Children and water
Children’s drinking likes and dislikes are established early in childhood so it is important to encourage good hydration at an early age. Water is one of the best drinks to give children as it helps with toileting difficulties, weight management, protection against certain chronic diseases, good oral and skin health, fitness levels and improved concentration.

Water from the tap is inexpensive and good for you
It is not necessary to buy bottled water to increase your water consumption. Try chilling tap water in the ‘fridge, it tastes good and is always ready for use.

Drink more water
Don’t wait until you are thirsty!

For more information
NHS Choices

Water UK
www.water.org.uk/home/water-for-health

Your own doctor or practice nurse