Q. What are the health benefits of drinking water?

A.

Drink more water. You've heard the advice before. But what's all the fuss about?

In a recent survey, 77 percent of working adults said they don't drink enough water.[1] And that's a problem.

There's the obvious...when you don't drink enough water, you'll start to feel thirsty. But being dehydrated can also lead to fatigue, poor mood, difficulty concentrating, headaches, and health problems.

So how much water should you drink?

It depends. The old-school rule to drink 8 glasses of water a day (64 ounces) is a good place to start for most people.

The National Academy of Medicine recommends most adults get 9 to 13 cups (72 to 104 ounces) of water per day.[2] That's from drinking water *and* eating fruits and vegetables that contain water.

You may need to drink more if you're highly active, sweat a lot, or live in a hot climate.

Health benefits of drinking water

Besides quenching your thirst, there are a lot of reasons to drink plenty of water. Drinking water and staying hydrated support important functions in your body.[3,4] Water helps:

- Keep the skin soft
- Control body temperature

Quench Your Thirst With Water

- Prevent fatigue
- Improve physical performance
- Support joint, muscle, and tissue function
- Improve circulation
- Control blood pressure
- Support brain function
- Remove waste from the blood
- Improve digestion
- Support weight management and metabolism
- Reduce the risk for chronic disease

Ways to drink more water

If you already drink plenty of water, keep it up. If you don't, *now* is always a good time to start.

Here are some things you can do to drink more water:

Drink water throughout the day. Have a glass of water in the morning when you first wake up. Have a glass of water when you get home. And drink water with meals.

Drink water before and during exercise such as walking, hiking, or biking. Drink at least every 30 minutes during moderate activity.

Carry a water bottle with you at work, in the car, and when you're on the go. Drink often.

Drink water before meals. Water can help suppress appetite if you're trying to lose weight or maintain a healthy weight.

Fill a water bottle and freeze it. Then take it with you for an ice-cold drink later in the day.

Drink water in place of caffeinated beverages, alcohol, and sugar-sweetened drinks.

If you don't like the taste of tap water, use a filter. Buy bottled water. Or add cucumber, lemon, lime, or other fruit to improve the flavor.

Thirsty for better health? Drink plenty of water. It's easy. It's inexpensive. And it contains zero calories.

References

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