

# Hydration

We all know that drinking water and being hydrated is important, but it's one of the things that is so easy to neglect daily. While it isn't possible for everyone to drink a gallon of water daily. Every person should be trying to drink at least half their body weight in ounces of water every day to ensure proper hydration.

Water is critical for every system in our bodies. From our skin to our brain, every cell in our body needs water.

## Some benefits of being hydrated are:

- **Hydration helps improve brain function:** Even mild dehydration can affect memory, cognition, reaction time, emotional balance, and anxiety. Our brains need to be hydrated in order to function well.
- **Hydration helps protect of your tissues, spinal cord, and joints:** The cartilage in our joints is made up of about 80% water. That's what helps to provide a cushion between our bones.
- **Hydration helps maximize physical performance:** When we are dehydrated our circulation slows down not allowing proper blood flow to our muscles when we need it.
- **Hydration helps prevent constipation:** Our bodies need water to help push food through our digestive tract. Water helps break down food and keep it moving.
- **Hydration helps you lose weight:** Water is a great tool for satiety. When we drink water before a meal we not only feel less hungry, but we also help get that food moving through our digestive tract a little quicker.
- **Hydration helps boost energy:** For the same reasons water helps our physical performance by allowing our blood to flow freely to where it needs to go. Water helps us feel energized by allowing our blood to smoothly circulate to our muscles and brain.
- **Hydration helps you regulate your temperature:** There is a lot of research that shows when our bodies are dehydrated, we tend to store more heat which makes it more difficult to dissipate heat when we need to.

Staying hydrated allows our bodies to rid itself of excess heat when necessary, protecting us from heat induced injury.

- **Hydration helps your heart health:** Our blood is made of mostly water. Like the rest of our muscles in our bodies our heart relies on hydrated blood to deliver all the minerals it needs to be healthy. When we are dehydrated we deplete our bodies of essential minerals like potassium, sodium, and magnesium (electrolytes).
- **Hydration improves body detoxification:** When we are hydrated our body is better able to rid itself of harmful substances. We do this through perspiration, bowel movements, urination, and breathing.

It's sounds simple to just drink more water on a daily basis, but there are things you can do to help you increase your water intake if you struggle to drink enough water:

1. Buy a water bottle that you love to use. Fill it up multiple times a day if you need to. Having a water bottle with a straw makes it really easy to sip all day long.
2. Add some fruit, or a squeeze of lemon to your water. Make it taste good so you are sure to drink it.
3. Set a reminder on your phone to remind you to drink water several times a day.
4. Set a goal to drink at least 1/2 your bodyweight in oz of water for 30 days, and then reward yourself with a non-food reward.