

Healthy LIVING while aging!



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Water, Water, Water

By Dr. Anne Lindsay

If you love water, you must love me because water is mostly what I am made of (besides 'sugar, spice and everything nice' of course!) Water, the liquid portion of our cells and tissues, makes up more than 60 percent of our body weight. It is the nutrient the body needs in the greatest amount. Every cell, tissue, organ and most every life-sustaining body process needs water to function.

Water *enters* the body primarily through liquids and foods and *leaves* the body through evaporation of sweat, moisture of exhaled breath, and excretion. Water balance is maintained with help from electrically charged particles called electrolytes (e.g., potassium and sodium). For example, if the electrolyte sodium (or salt) content is high, the body may stimulate thirst to drink and absorb more water to maintain fluid balance.

Water needs vary greatly for each of us depending on the foods we eat, the temperature outside, the humidity in which we live, our activity level and many other factors. During periods of high water loss (e.g. hot weather, sweating or exercise), our water needs increase. It may be helpful to eat a few salty snacks to help retain cellular fluids or stimulate thirst. However, as we age, we gradually lose our ability to feel thirst. This may result in dehydration. On the other hand, we are also slower to excrete water and electrolytes, which can result in water or sodium retention. This excess fluid may affect the heart and kidneys and may contribute to high blood pressure. The key to fluid balance is being proactive.

Generally speaking, adults over 65 need about 1.7 liters of water each day (58 ounces or about 7 cups). It is best to sip small amounts of fluid throughout the day, especially during hot weather and while exercising. Hydrate the body both before and during exercise or physical activities, especially outdoors. Drink slowly for about 2 hours *before* your activity to allow time for fluid absorption and then drink periodically during the activity. An important part of our regular diet, we drink water by the glass, we get it from foods we eat and we even use it to prepare instant foods (e.g., oatmeal). I guess it's a good thing water is free and ready to drink because if it came in an instant package, what on earth would we add to it?

For more information about Healthy Aging education or resources,
please visit our website: extension.unr.edu and search "Healthy Aging"
or contact Dakota at 702-948-5916

Some suggestions to add more water to your diet:

- Choose water instead of soda at vending machines and restaurants
- Drink water, skim milk or juice (limited amounts) with meals and snacks
- Add extra water to juice or juice beverages
- Limit alcohol and caffeine intake, as both increase urine output causing dehydration
- Eat plenty of fruits and vegetables, as they contain water

Beverages such as sports drinks loaded with electrolytes and small amounts of sugar can *help* the stomach absorb fluid better. But be careful! If they contain too much sugar, it may *reduce* the bodies' ability to absorb the fluid and hydrate the cells.



Drink flavorful fruit, herb and vegetable infused water! It is very easy to make at home with your favorite combination of flavors. Using flavors instead of sugary contents makes it naturally low in calories and sugar.

Watermelon Salsa

Ingredients:

- 2 cups small cubes of watermelon
- 1/4 cup chopped green onions
- 1/4 cup red onion, finely chopped
- 1 tablespoon rice vinegar
- 1 tablespoon chopped cilantro
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cumin

Directions:

In a medium bowl, mix all of the ingredients.

Refrigerate leftovers within 2 hours.



- ♦ Serve salsa with burritos, tacos, fish or grilled meat.
 - ♦ Try adding corn, chili peppers, or chopped avocado.
 - ♦ If you do not have vinegar, try lemon or lime juice.
- Serve with fresh vegetables or Tortilla Chips.

Nutrition Information

16 Servings / 2 tbsp each

Calories	10
Total Fat	0g
Cholesterol	0mg
Sodium	15mg
Fiber	0g
Sugar	2g
Protein	0g

Recipe offered through
<https://www.mainesnap-ed.org/>

AN IMPORTANT TIP FROM DR. LINDSAY

Keep a filled **water bottle handy** 😊

Throughout the day, **sip water at regular intervals** 😊

This will help absorb and retain water **to keep you hydrated** 😊

Drinking too much all at once will only **fill up your stomach** 😞

The body cannot absorb it all at one time, so most is **lost through urination** 😞

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