Did you know that the human body is made up mostly of water? Our bodies are 60-70% water, which is why it is so important to stay hydrated each day.

How Much Water Do I Need?
The average person needs about 64 ounces (8 cups) of water each day.

What is Dehydration?
Dehydration happens when the body does not have as much water or fluid as it needs. It can be mild, moderate, or severe. Mild dehydration can usually be corrected by drinking water or fluids, but severe dehydration is an emergency.

Symptoms of Mild Dehydration:
- Thirst
- Dry mouth
- Dark yellow urine
- Fatigue (tired)
- Irritability
- Confusion
- Muscle cramps or weakness
- Dizziness

Why am I at Risk?
As a person ages, they start to lose their sense of thirst. So, they do not realize they need to drink more fluids.

Tips for Staying Hydrated
- Aim to drink at least 6 to 8 cups (48 to 64 ounces) of water each day.
- Do not wait until you are thirsty to drink.
- Keep a water bottle with you to keep track of how much you drink.
- Have a cup of water with each meal and one with each snack to help you reach your goal.
- Make a checklist for each time you have one cup of water.

You May Need More Water
You may need more fluids with some medications. If you have questions about your medications, or how much water you should drink, ask your doctor.

If you spend a lot of time in the sun during the summer, you will also need to drink more. When you are in the sun, be sure to wear a hat, sunscreen, and carry a bottle of cold water with you.

Remember: Often times, when you feel thirsty you are already dehydrated.
Caffeine and Hydration
Some people worry that drinks with caffeine might cause water loss or dehydration. Research has shown that this is not true unless consumed in large amounts (several cups a day). Water is the best drink to stay hydrated, but 1-2 cups a day of caffeinated beverages, such as coffee or tea, can count towards your total water intake.

Juice, Soda, and Sports Drinks
Juice, soda, and sports drinks all provide water and can count towards your daily intake. However, these beverages are high in calories because they are sweetened with natural or added sugars. Choose water more often because it is low-cost, calorie-free, and easy to get.

What about Exercise?
If you exercise, make sure to drink water before, during, and after the activity. This will help to keep your body from getting too hot.

Check your urine color:
- If your urine is clear or a light yellow color, you are probably drinking the right amount of water.
- If your urine is dark yellow, your body may not have enough fluids. You could be dehydrated and should try to make an effort to drink more liquids during the day.

Cucumber Mint Water

\[
\frac{1}{4} \text{ cup fresh mint leaves} \\
\frac{1}{2} \text{ medium cucumber, thinly sliced} \\
1 \frac{1}{2} \text{ quarts cold water}
\]

1. Put the mint leaves in a pitcher and use a wooden spoon to gently mash them.
2. Add the cucumber slices and water to the pitcher.
3. Stir and serve over ice or store in the refrigerator for at least 15 minutes.

Also try adding these to water:
- Orange slices
- Lemon slices
- Lime slices
- Frozen berries (use them as ice cubes then eat once they thaw out)

Check out our website at: web.uri.edu/snaped

This material was funded by USDA’s Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program – SNAP. The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) provides nutrition assistance to people with low income. It can help you buy nutritious foods for a better diet. To find out more, contact your local DHS office, or call the URI SNAP-Ed nutrition program at 1-877-Food-URI (1-877-366-3874). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.