



# healthyfood@sport

## Water – Nature's Best Fact Sheet



Water makes up about two-thirds of your body. Water helps keep your body's temperature stable. It also carries nutrients and oxygen to cells, cushions joints, protects organs and tissues and removes wastes. We lose water from our bodies through sweating, breathing, and excreting bodily fluids.

Water helps your body function at its best. If you become dehydrated from not having enough sufficient fluid in your body you will start having symptoms such as headaches, fatigue, crankiness and poor concentration. Furthermore, it will affect your sports performance.

Water is the best choice for quenching your thirst and it is the preferred drink for rehydration during and after sport.

Water and a healthy diet are sufficient for children and adolescents who do not participate in high-intensity physical activity lasting more than one hour. The average child or adolescent does not engage in enough physical activity to warrant consumption of sports drinks.

Water doesn't have all the extra sugar found in fruit drinks and juices, soft drinks, sports drinks and flavoured mineral waters that can contribute to tooth decay. In fact, drinking water also helps rinse your mouth and prevent tooth decay. Furthermore, tap water contains fluoride which helps develop strong teeth.

Water is required before, during and after physical activity to replenish what you lose through sweat. Children and young people often don't feel thirsty even when they are dehydrated, so it's important to drink water regularly even if you are not thirsty.

Water is inexpensive compared to flavoured drinks.

### How much water is recommended each day?

- Children aged 4-8 years: 1.2 litres per day or approximately 5 glasses
- Children aged 9-13 years: 1.4 - 1.6 litres per day or approximately 5- 6 glasses
- Adolescents aged 14-18 years: 1.9 litres per day or approximately 7 glasses

Please note that you may need to drink extra water on hot days and during moderate or vigorous activity.



## Tips to help you drink more water:

- Always pack a water bottle whenever you go to sport. You will be able to refill your water bottle via the Healthy Food@Sport project water storage container your club/organisation has received by participating in the project.
- A great way to keep your water chilled – fill up your water bottle half way with water and place it in the freezer to form an ice cube, and then top up with water.
- Keep a couple of full water bottles in the fridge during summer so you have them on hand and ready when you go to sport.
- To add a little flavour place some cut up lemon slices, strawberries or mint to your chilled water.

As the days start to heat up be sure to drink more water when you are exercising. It is also a good idea to drink water regularly throughout the day and not to wait until you are thirsty to avoid dehydration.



## References:

### Healthy Eating Research

[www.healthyeatingresearch.org](http://www.healthyeatingresearch.org)

### Sports Dietitians Australia

[www.sportsdietitians.com.au](http://www.sportsdietitians.com.au)

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