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THE FIT FACTOR

LIFESTYLE CHANGE

Consuming enough water is hugely important for your health and wellbeing. Try having a half or full litre bottle with you throughout the day – by refilling it yourself you can monitor your daily intake. You need at least two litres per day.

FITNESS TIP

Keeping hydrated in any physical activity is very important. It is linked to how you feel and perform both during and after exercise. Losing around 2% of your body's water can decrease performance by up to 20%.

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YOU can survive without food for more than a month but you can only live without water for approximately one week.

As we move into the winter months and the colder temperatures kick in, many lose the habit of drinking water throughout the day. Here are a few reasons why your water intake needs to be consistent all year round:

- Lack of water, or dehydration, reduces the amount of blood in your body, forcing your heart to pump harder in order to help deliver to your muscles. In the early stages of dehydration you can become dizzy, irritable and experience headaches.

- Your whole body is approximately 60% water but on its own your brain is 70% water, and your lungs are nearly 90% water. It is essential to keep your body hydrated in order to function properly.

- Water can also have an impact on your weight as much of the time you think you are hungry, you are actually thirsty. If your major organs are not working 100%, your body's metabolism rate can be

affected by slowing down.

- Each day your body must replace around 2.5 litres of water through ingested liquid and foods. It also helps your body flush out toxins.

Staying hydrated

- Take a pint of water to bed and if you haven't drunk it through the night, finish it when you wake up in the morning. This is a good way to start looking after your body for the day, it will also help kick start your metabolism. Adding cucumber or lime is a good option for flavour.

- Have a half or full litre bottle with you throughout the day. By refilling it yourself you can monitor your daily intake.

- Many fruits and vegetables have a high water content. For example, watermelon is 92% water, grapefruit and strawberries are around 90%, celery and radishes contain 95% water, cucumbers contain 96%, spinach and peppers 92%. Make sure you add more into your daily diet.

- The University of Aberdeen Medical School found that the

combination of salts, minerals and natural sugars in some fruits and vegetables can actually hydrate you more effectively than water or even sports drinks. Watermelon was on top of the list containing essential high amounts of rehydration salts calcium, magnesium, potassium and sodium.

Staying hydrated while exercising

It's essential to keep hydrated while exercising as water regulates your body temperature and lubricates your joints. It also helps transport nutrients to give you energy.

If you're not properly hydrated, your body will be unable to perform at its highest level. You may experience fatigue, muscle cramps, dizziness, or more serious symptoms.

Keeping yourself hydrated is vital in all aspects of body and mind from beautiful skin to preventing disease, therefore check how much water you and your children consume and remember, during the summer, especially on warm days you will need to consume even more fluids.



> Keep topping up your water bottle – particularly when exercising – to keep a tap on your water intake