

Drink water instead

Why does your body needs water?

Around 60% of the body is made up of water. Water helps our blood flow, forms saliva for swallowing, and regulates body temperature. We can only survive a few days without water because it's essential to keep our body functioning.

Your body gets water through the things you drink and from fluid-filled foods. In fact, food accounts for ~20% of your daily fluids. Foods that contain a lot of water include soups, yogurt, sauces, and some fruits and vegetables like watermelon and cucumber.

Water is important for your kidneys. One of the main jobs of the kidneys is to filter your blood and remove waste products and extra water. Water helps your kidneys remove waste products, which leave the body via your urine (wee).

Too little water can cause dehydration leading to **reduced blood flow** to your kidneys, putting you at risk for kidney damage.

Best ways to hydrate

Water is the best drink to satisfy your thirst. If you need a bit of flavor, try adding sliced cucumbers, lemon, or berries to your water. Other healthy fluid options include tea, sparkling water, plain or plant-based milk.

There is no set number of glasses of water you need to drink each day for healthy kidneys.

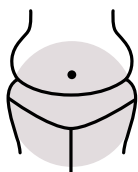
Just drink water when you feel thirsty!



Drink water instead

Avoid sugary drinks

Although sugary drinks such as soft drinks and cordial count towards your fluid, they are not the best choice. Drinks high in added sugars can increase your risk for:



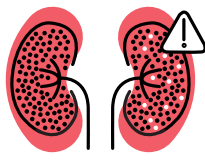
Weight gain



Diabetes



Tooth decay



Kidney disease

Low or 'no sugar' soft drinks are better options but still not as good as water. Many contain chemical additives and artificial dyes which can increase potassium or phosphate levels in your blood. They can also damage your teeth.

Energy drinks are high in sugar and caffeine.

They may contain extra salts that can increase your blood pressure. Choose water over energy drinks and soft drinks to reduce risks to your health.

Juices from fruits and vegetables contain high levels of natural sugars and potassium which are easily absorbed into the blood. Water is a better option compared to sugar-sweetened juices, particularly if you have diabetes or are on a low potassium diet.

For more information about sugar in your drinks, visit <https://www.rethinksugarydrink.org.au/>



Did you know that one 355mL can of cola can contain **39 grams of sugar?**





Listen to your thirst

The amount you need to drink depends on things like your body size, your age, the climate, how active you are, and if you are unwell. You need more water when:

- you exercise more
- it's hot outside
- you're unwell with diarrhoea or vomiting
- you are pregnant.

Your body will tell you when you are thirsty.

Dehydration means your body does not have enough water and being thirsty is a sign of dehydration. Other signs of dehydration include:

- **dark-coloured urine**
- **headaches**
- **slow reaction time**
- **dry inner nose and cracked lips**
- **weakness or confusion.**

If you are feeling dehydrated:

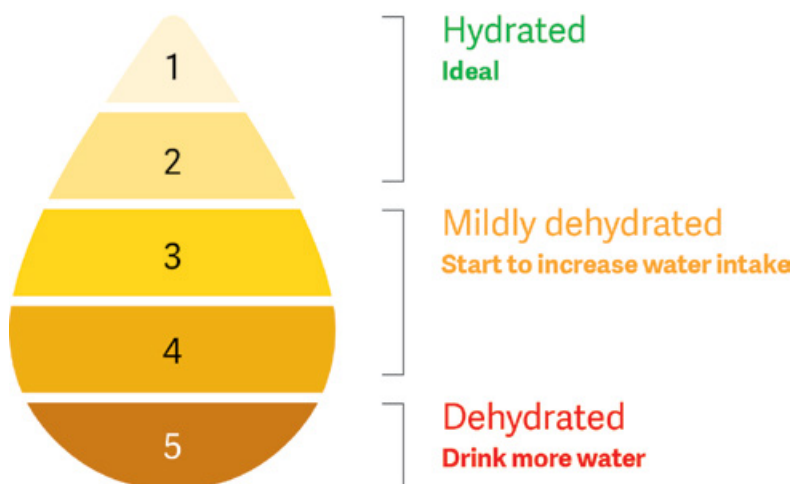
- stop what you are doing and find a cool, shady area
- drink water slowly with small sips at a time
- splash yourself with water or put a cool, wet cloth on your face or on the back of your neck if you are feeling too hot
- go to the hospital if you do not feel better within 30 minutes or have symptoms like confusion, vomiting, weakness, or cramping.

The amount you need to drink depends on things like your body size, your age, the climate, how active you are, and if you are unwell.

Drink water instead

Stay hydrated!

Monitoring the colour of your urine and how often you go to the toilet is a good way to know if your body is getting enough water. A sign of good hydration is when your urine is clear or pale in colour most times of the day. Darker yellow urine is a sign of dehydration and you should drink more water, especially if you are thirsty.



Drink to satisfy
your thirst.

Managing fluids with kidney disease

Water is the best liquid for hydration at all stages of kidney disease. How much you need to drink may change at different stages.

Your fluid intake needs may change over time and depends on:

- your level of kidney function
- how much you urinate (wee)
- if you have any heart problems
- if you are dehydrated.

If you have early-stage kidney disease, polycystic kidney disease or a kidney transplant, focus on maintaining good hydration.

Your urine should be clear or pale in colour most times of the day.

If you have kidney failure or need dialysis treatment, your healthcare team may tell you how to limit the amount of fluid you eat or drink each day. Following a fluid allowance helps to reduce strain on your heart, decrease swelling, and avoid further health complications and unwanted hospital admissions.

If you need to restrict your fluids, be sure to account for the amount you are drinking and the fluids you get from your diet. In your daily fluid allowance, account for any foods that are liquid at room temperature, such as soup, yogurt, and ice cream.



Things to remember:

- ✓ **There is no set number of glasses of water you need to drink each day for healthy kidneys. Drink enough to satisfy your thirst.**
- ✓ **Choose water instead of sugar-sweetened drinks like cordial, soft drinks, energy drinks and juices.**
- ✓ **Most people with kidney disease do not need to limit fluids. If you have kidney failure or are on dialysis, your doctor will tell you if you have a fluid allowance.**

What does that word mean?

Blood pressure – The pressure of the blood in the arteries as it is pumped around the body by the heart.

Dehydration – When you do not have enough fluids in your body. If dehydration is severe, it can cause serious problems, and you may need to go to hospital.

Dialysis – A treatment for kidney failure that removes waste products and excess fluid from your blood by filtering your blood through a special membrane. There are two types of dialysis: haemodialysis and peritoneal dialysis.

Kidneys – Most people have two kidneys, each about the size of an adult fist and weighing 150 grams. Inside each kidney there are about one million tiny units called nephrons. The nephrons are the part of the kidney that filters the blood. Each nephron is made up of a very small filter called a glomerulus. As blood passes through the nephron, water and waste products are removed. Most of the water returns to the blood and the waste products collect in the bladder then leave the body as urine (wee). Most kidney diseases attack the nephrons.

Polycystic kidney disease (PKD) – An inherited kidney disease where many fluid filled sacs (cysts) grow on the kidneys.

Potassium – A mineral in your body that is controlled by your kidneys. It helps nerves, muscles and other cells work well. At very high levels, it may cause your heart to stop

Urine – The name for excess fluid and waste products that are removed from the body by the kidneys. Commonly called wee.

Special Thanks! This educational resource is supported by a sponsorship provided by Boehringer Ingelheim



Free Kidney Helpline 1800 454 363
kidney.org.au

If you have a hearing or speech impairment, contact the National Relay Service on 1800 555 677 or relayservice.com.au. Have them connect you to the Free Kidney Helpline - 1800 454 363



**WANT TO
LEARN MORE?**

Kidney Health 4 Life is a health and wellbeing program equipping people, and those that care for them, with the knowledge and resources to take more active management of their kidney health or kidney disease.



**Join Kidney Health 4 Life
by scanning the QR code**

This is intended as a general introduction to this topic and is not meant to substitute for your doctor's or health professional's advice. All care is taken to ensure that the information is relevant to the reader and applicable to each state in Australia. It should be noted that Kidney Health Australia recognises that each person's experience is individual and that variations do occur in treatment and management due to personal circumstances, the health professional and the state one lives in. Should you require further information always consult your doctor or health professional.

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