

## **The Real Reasons to Drink Your 32 Ounces of Water Daily**

There are many reasons why it is important to drink water, especially if you are dieting:

- \* Initial weight loss is largely due to loss of water, and you need to drink an adequate amount of water in order to avoid dehydration.
- \* The process of burning calories requires an adequate supply of water in order to function efficiently; dehydration slows down the fat-burning process.
- \* Burning calories creates toxins (think of the exhaust coming out of your car), and water plays a vital role in flushing them out of your body.
- \* Dehydration causes a reduction in blood volume; a reduction in blood volume causes a reduction in the supply of oxygen to your muscles; and a reduction in the supply of oxygen to your muscles can make you feel tired.
- \* Water helps maintain muscle tone by assisting muscles in their ability to contract, and it lubricates your joints. Proper hydration can help reduce muscle and joint soreness when exercising.
- \* A healthy (weight loss) diet includes a good amount of fiber. But while fiber is normally helpful to your digestive system, without adequate fluids it can cause constipation instead of helping to eliminate it.
- \* Drinking water with a meal may make you feel full sooner and therefore satisfied eating less. Note, however, that drinking water alone may not have this effect. In order to feel satiated (not hungry), our bodies need bulk, calories and nutrients.

## **But How Much Water Do I Really Need?**

You have probably heard that you should drink eight 8-ounce glasses of water a day but that isn't necessarily the case.

How much water you actually need depends on your weight, level of activity, the temperature and humidity of your environment, and your diet. Your diet makes a difference because if you eat plenty of water-dense foods like fruits and vegetables your need to drink water will be diminished.

When you drink enough water, your urine will usually be pale yellow, though vitamin supplements and antibiotics can discolor it. On the other hand, you shouldn't need to run to the bathroom too frequently. When in doubt, drink a little more.

When you feel thirsty, you are already dehydrated. Try to avoid this situation by drinking in advance. Be especially careful when participating in activities where you won't be able to stop to get caught up.

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