

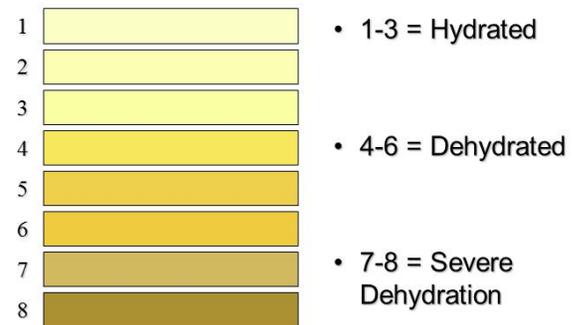
Hydration Challenge

Our bodies are composed largely of water (over half) and getting enough water is more important than food, sleep or exercise. Water is an important component of almost all bodily functions. Water carries nutrients and oxygen throughout the body and helps convert food into energy. It also protects and cushions vital organs, lubricates joints and regulates body temperature.

Your body needs to be hydrated in order to function at an optimal level. Dehydration can affect your mood by making you feel tired, cranky or irritable and can decrease productivity and focus. Dehydration may also result in constipation so be sure to drink enough water to help keep your digestive tract cleaned out and functioning optimally. In a normal day, your body loses and needs to replace about 2-3 quarts of water. Water is lost through most bodily functions including breathing. We can replace water through many foods we eat. Examples of foods with high water content include greens and most fruits and vegetables. The best source of hydration is water or drinks that primarily contain water like sport replacement drinks, herbal teas and lemon water, but other liquids can contribute to your water intake.

There are lots of recommendations out there about how much water you should be getting each day but the truth is that this varies from person to person. You can get a healthy amount of water by drinking when you are thirsty, sipping water, having 1-2 glasses with all meals. Remember that all types of water count towards your water intake, even if you are not drinking straight water and foods contribute as well. You can use the colour of your urine to guide your hydration level. If your urine is a light yellow colour you are drinking enough. If it is a darker yellow you may need to increase your fluid intake. See the chart to determine where you may fall. Once you determine roughly what your water amount is per day based on this chart you can input it below. Use an easy measurement like a certain number of bottles or glasses.

Hydration Urine Chart



Here are some tips for increasing your fluid intake

- Have a drink of water or juice when you first get up in the morning
- Get yourself a reusable water bottle that you can carry with you
- Drink consistently throughout the day

- Fluids are more easily absorbed by our body when they are somewhat cooler so keep 1-2 bottles in the fridge and make sure you are drinking and refilling them each day
- Stop at a fountain for a drink when you walk past one
- Remember to drink when exercising, small sips in between sets will help keep you hydrated
- Drink before you get thirsty, thirst is a sign that your body is already dehydrated so drink regularly throughout the day

This brings us to your challenge. I have given you a 7-day chart below but you can track your water intake for longer periods of time that that if you would like. Track your water amount of the next 7 days. You can start with either 8 glasses a day or you can take half of your body weight in pounds and drink that in ounces ($160/2 = 80$ oz/day). Remember that this is just a guideline. You can then use the urine chart above and how your feeling to gauge if you need more or less water from there. Keep track of how much water you are drinking each day below and aim for your goal each day using the tips above.

My Water Amount: _____

DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4	DAY 5	DAY 6	DAY 7