

Hydration

Body & health

How much water, where it comes from, and what thirst actually indicates.

Water is needed for temperature regulation, transport, joint lubrication and every chemical reaction in the body. Needs vary with size, activity, climate and diet.

TYPICAL
~2 L/day

FROM FOOD
~20%

BODY WATER
50–60%

- Common guidance: about 2 litres of fluid a day for adults.
- Roughly 20% of intake comes from food.
- Tea, coffee and milk all count toward fluid intake.
- Thirst appears at around 1–2% dehydration.
- Pale straw urine suggests adequate hydration.
- Needs rise substantially with heat, exercise and illness.

LOOK FOR IT

Dark yellow urine and a dry mouth together are a reliable prompt to drink. A number on a bottle is not.

Drinking far beyond thirst can dilute blood sodium dangerously. More is not automatically better.