

Fact sheet

June 2006

Water – the original refreshment

Northumbrian Water provides you with high quality drinking water, supplied to your home every day. By drinking more water you could improve your own health and fitness.

Water is the most natural thing you can drink. Our bodies are 70% water and our brains are 78% water, so it is important to drink water to keep our minds and bodies active.

Is water cool?

Water helps every cell in our body stay healthy. It doesn't contain any sugars so is good for our teeth and it is totally calorie and cholesterol free so it is the healthiest way to quench your thirst.

Is water vital for life?

Our bodies need water to survive and be healthy. Without water we would die in less than a week.

How much water is in my brain?

Your brain is mostly made of water so even being a little dehydrated (thirsty) can cause headaches and dizziness. Drinking small amounts of water throughout the day helps the brain to work more efficiently. The brain works most effectively when it is fully hydrated.

Feel thirsty?

By the time you are thirsty you have already lost enough water to reduce your concentration by 13%. Your mental performance improves when you drink plenty of water, as you are not distracted by feelings of thirst, tiredness and irritability.



How many glasses should I drink?

The amount you need depends on how heavy you are, how active you are and what the weather is like. But around 6-8 glasses a day and more in hot weather or when you are active.

A healthy drink?

Water is a naturally healthy drink. Many artificial drinks are high in sugar, caffeine and artificial additives. Water doesn't harm your teeth and is available straight from the tap.

Does water help my blood?

Water in your blood helps deliver food, oxygen and other useful things your cells need to keep going. By drinking plenty of water you can help to prevent a range of problems from headaches to kidney problems.

Can it make me fit?

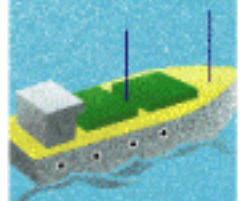
Drinking enough water helps you to increase fitness levels.

During sport and exercise our bodies lose a lot of water. We even lose water just by breathing. Unless we replace the fluid we will become dehydrated and this will effect our body's performance, exercise will feel much harder and we will begin to feel tired.

Scientists advise sports people to drink plenty of water – before, during and after taking exercise. Ideally keep a drink of water near to where you are exercising and drink regularly to top up your fluid levels.



Water for health



By drinking water during and after exercise you replace lost fluids, cool down and you can prevent dizziness and tiredness.

If you experience cramp during exercise it's a sure sign you have become dehydrated.

Why not get into the water too - swimming is one of the best forms of exercise as it uses lots of muscles but doesn't put a strain on our muscles and joints.

Can it make me clever?

Water is proven to increase attention and concentration, helping you to learn more.



How much water do I lose in a day?

Every day you lose the same amount of water as a can of drink just by breathing. If you breath on a cold mirror you can see the water being lost as you can see the water droplets as they condense on the mirror.

You lose water in other ways too, for instance when you sweat during exercise and also when you go to the toilet.

What else is good about water?

Water has wonderful restorative properties; it is a natural, fat-free appetite suppressant containing no calories or cholesterol. It helps the body metabolise fat and maintain skin and muscle tone. Water is one of the cheapest beauty treatments. Puffy eyes will revive with cotton wool pads soaked in chilled water. Or, cover your head with a towel and very carefully hold your face over a basin of hot water for deep pore cleansing. If you rinse your face with cold water it removes dirt, helps moisturise and boosts circulation. Dry and wrinkled skin, puffy eyes and broken nails are often signs of dehydration. Skin dehydration increases not only with age but also exposure to central heating, air conditioning and sunlight. So keep your youthful looks and drink more water.



Water for the young at heart

Water is good for you no matter how old you are. Dehydration has been identified as one of the main causes of falls in the elderly. Many of the typical symptoms of adult dehydration include dizziness, confusion, fainting, falls, headaches, constipation, urinary tract infections, pressure sores and others. Drinking more water can help prevent these and it will also reduce the risk of coronary heart disease and help stabilise your blood pressure.

How much?

Drinking a daily 6-8 glasses or two litres of water sounds like a lot but actually it quite easy.

- Every time you make a cup of tea or coffee, pour yourself a glass of water or even better, replace the hot drink with water.
- Keep a jug of water in the fridge with a supply of lemon slices.
- Liven up a glass of water with a squirt of lemon or lime juice.
- Start as you mean to go on, with a glass of water when you wake up.
- If you are out and about during the day, carry a bottle of tap water so you can have a drink whenever you want.

So remember

Drinking plenty of water can help you to:

- concentrate better and make your brain more efficient
- stay healthy
- have healthier skin and fresher breath
- feel fresh and more alert
- perform better at sports.

Lack of water (dehydration) can lead to:

- tiredness
- headaches
- difficulty concentrating
- unhealthy skin and hair
- smelly breath
- health problems
- not performing to the best of your ability at sports

Whatever your age, whatever you do, water is good for you.

Think healthy, drink the recommended 6-8 glasses of fresh tap water every day and feel the difference.

