

Culinary Commentary

with Jenny Pitcher, Registered Dietitian

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Hydration Information

Water/fluid intake can be a confusing topic. It is generally known that most of us should drink at least 64 oz (or 8 x 8 oz glasses) of water each day. But is that really true? The US National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine make the following fluid recommendations:

Men: About 15.5 cups (3.7 liters) of fluids a day
Women: About 11.5 cups (2.7 liters) of fluids a day

That is a lot more than 64 ounces! But keep in mind that there are many ways to take in fluids aside from water. You get fluids from a wide range of sources including:

- Coffee and Tea – caffeinated or decaf
- Fruits and vegetables
- Soups and Stews
- Milk drinks and yogurt of any kind
- Water
- Other non-alcoholic drinks, like lemonade or juice

So, aiming for 8 x 8 oz glasses of water per day while being mindful of choosing foods with a higher fluid content, like fruits and vegetables, will help you achieve your overall fluid goals. Keep in mind that some people may need more fluids while others may need a little less. You may need more fluid if you:

- Exercise or work outside in the heat
- If you are pregnant or breastfeeding
- If you have an acute illness with a fever, vomiting or diarrhea

Luckily, our bodies are usually quite good at letting us know how much to drink. But, as we age, our thirst mechanism decreases, making it harder to rely on thirst as an indicator of fluid need. Check out this [article](#) for tips and tricks to increase your water intake and stay hydrated throughout the day.

What if you don't like the taste of water or want to spice things up? You can flavor your water or iced herbal tea with fruits, vegetables, and fresh herbs. Try to limit use of flavor packets with artificial flavors, sugar, and dyes. Below are some of my favorite water-flavoring combinations, or [check out this recipe roundup](#) post on the OhioHealth Blog!

- Lemon & Mint
- Lime, Thyme and Rosemary
- Watermelon and Basil
- Raspberries and Mint
- Blackberries and Sage
- Lemon and Cucumber
- Orange and Ginger



Jenny Pitcher

Registered Dietitian

Certified Health & Wellness Coach

Jennifer.pitcher@ohiohealth.com