

Hospital Hydration Best Practice Toolkit

5 Did you know? Facts about water as a nutrient

- Water is the main constituent of the body and forms 50-60% of body weight and around 75% of volume. The exact amount varies with age and sex and also depends on body fat content.
- Water contains no fats, no proteins, no carbohydrates and therefore no calories.
- Water is the perfect complement for a nutritionally balanced meal.
- There are no health advantages to drinking expensive bottled water instead of tap water from the public water supply.
- Even in the absence of any visible perspiration, approximately half of water loss occurs through the operation of our lungs and skin.
- The NHS advises that where clinically appropriate, patients should be drinking 2.5 litres of water a day, or half a litre with each meal.
- The Thirst 4 Life hydration initiative undertaken by Buckinghamshire NHS and Buckinghamshire County Council led to a 45% reduction in A&E attendances at Wycombe General Hospital from nursing and residential homes between November 2004 and March 2005.
- Unless there is specific medical advice against it, everybody can benefit from practicing good hydration.
- Remember that consuming sugary drinks slows down the rate at which water can be absorbed from the stomach.
- Fresh tap water does not need to be filtered or treated in any way.

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- Water is one of the six basic nutrients. It is widely seen as the most important because the body requires it constantly and all the important chemical reactions – such as the production of energy – take place in water.
- A hospital patient could drink two litres of tap water a day for nearly five months, and cost the NHS just the price of a first class stamp.
- 10 litres of tap water costs around one penny – that can be as much as 1,000 times cheaper than soft drinks, caffeinated drinks and bottled water.
- Simply breathing in and out uses more than a pint of water a day. Without water, you would only expect to live for around one week.
- Tap water quality in the UK is among the highest in the world.
- Drinking water helps keep the body flushed of waste products.
- Strange as it sounds, drinking more water actually helps to reduce water retention.
- We each use around 150 litres of water a day, but national surveys show us that we currently drink as little as one litre – that's around half the amount we need.
- We lose lots of water when we suffer from diarrhoea, sickness or infections that cause a fever. It is vital to drink more water at these times.
- Tap water tastes best when it is served fresh and chilled.
- It is generally recommended that adults should drink around two litres of water daily and considerably more when they perform exercise and/or the weather is hot. 6-8 good-sized glasses of water a day should give you this amount.
- Being well hydrated helps medicines to work more effectively and helps combat the diuretic effect of some medicines.
- If your tap water tastes of chlorine, put it in the fridge or leave it to stand for a short while and the taste will go.

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- Of the total amount of water on the planet, just 3% is fresh water. Much of that is currently frozen, leaving just 1% available to drink.
- When the body is not adequately hydrated, it responds by conserving its stocks, shifting water to where it is most needed and causing thirst.
- Fluid loss corresponding to 2.5% of body weight has been shown to reduce an athlete's physical performance capacity by 45%.
- For the price of one cup of coffee (£1), you can drink the equivalent of 1,000 litres of tap water.
- Water is the drink of choice for protecting your teeth and gums.