



Aging Healthfully Newsletter

Illinois Department on Aging



Staying Hydrated During the Hot Summer Months

Now that it is much warmer outside, many of us are taking advantage of being outside to enjoy this beautiful summer weather!

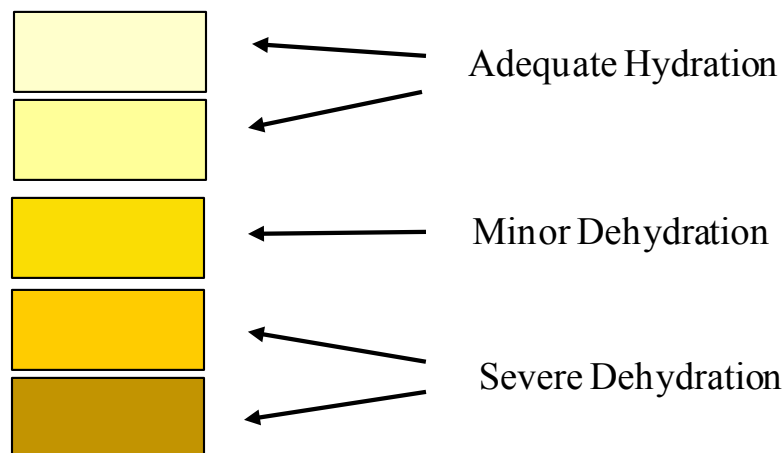
There is so much to do outdoors to stay active and soak up all nature has to offer but staying hydrated can be quite difficult in the hot summer months, **especially for older adults.**

Water that is lost from the body must be replaced. Most of the water we lose is through urination. The kidneys control how much water your body reabsorbs to help maintain a healthy balance, however other factors such as exercising, taking diuretics, or spending too long outside with high temperatures can increase the amount of water lost from the body.

Dehydration and heat illnesses can quickly become a serious health problem when the amount of water lost in the body (i.e. through sweat, evaporation, exhalation, and urination) is greater than the amount of water taken in through foods, beverages, and metabolic reactions within the body.

Older adults are at a higher risk of developing dehydration compared to younger adults. Dehydration can happen long before your thirst mechanism kicks in – so how can you tell if you are well hydrated? Use the urine color chart below to gauge your hydration status.

Using Urine Color to Gauge Your Hydration Status



What Are the Best Foods and Beverages to Consume to Stay Hydrated?

Fruits and vegetables rank the highest when it comes foods high in water content. For beverages, you guessed it... Water is the very best!

There are of course a variety of beverages that can be hydrating too, such as unsweetened iced tea or sparkling water with lemon, but sugary drinks like soda, fruit drinks, bottled sweetened teas and coffee drinks can add more than 300 calories to your daily intake without much nutritional value.

Here are some of the top foods and beverages to consume if you are looking to increase your hydration and your nutrition!

Hydrating Foods:

- Iceberg Lettuce: ~ 96% water content
- Raw Cucumbers: ~ 95% water content
- Watermelon: ~ 90%-99% water content
- Fresh Peaches: ~ 89% water content
- Fresh Pineapple: ~ 86% water content
- Apples, Oranges, Grapes, Carrots, Cooked Broccoli: ~ 80%-89% water content
- Canned Ripe Olives: ~ 80% water content
- Baked Sweet Potato: ~ 76% water content
- Bananas, Avocado, Cottage Cheese, Corn, Shrimp: ~ 70%-79% water content
- Pasta, Legumes, Salmon, Ice Cream, Chicken Breast: ~ 60%-69% water content



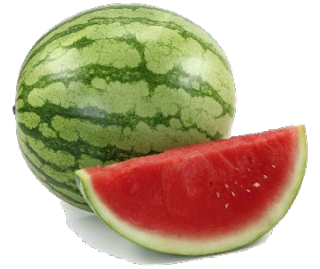
Hydrating Beverages:

- Water, including sparkling water, is the most hydrating choice when it comes to beverages!
- Low-Fat Milk: ~ 90%-99% water content
- 100% Fruit Juice: ~ 80-89% water content
 - Tip: add 2oz (a large shot glass) of 100% juice to your water or sparkling water for a hint of flavor without adding too many calories
- Unsweetened Tea: ~ 90%-100% water content
- Plain Coffee: ~ 90%-100% water content
- Vegetable Juice: ~ 90%-100% water content



July is National Watermelon Month!

At just 80 calories for a 2-cup serving and 25% of your recommended Daily Value for vitamin C, watermelon is one of the best fruits to enjoy while keeping you hydrated this summer!



How to choose a good watermelon? Choose one that is firm, free of cuts, dents, or bruises, and feels heavy for its size. There should be a light yellow-colored spot on the bottom, which means it sat in the field for some time ripening in the sun! It should last roughly 3 to 4 weeks after being harvested.

Top 10 Ways to Enjoy Ripe Watermelon:

- 1. Just the way it is** – Watermelon is tasty without adding anything else to it. It is full of healthy nutrients like water, vitamins A and C, lycopene, and potassium.
- 2. Sip it** – Make a pitcher of watermelon juice using a juicer or blended with some sparkling water added for a refreshing beverage.
- 3. Serve it like Dessert** – slice the watermelon as you would pizza slices and top with strawberry cream cheese, slivered almonds, and berries on top.
- 4. Make a Smoothie** – try the Watermelon Coco-Lime Smoothie recipe (attachment to the newsletter) or make your own watermelon smoothie with watermelon cubes, Greek yogurt, a ripe banana, and strawberries.
- 5. Freeze it into “ice” Cubes** – cube fresh watermelon and freeze some of it to use as watermelon “ice cubes” to chill your beverages and add a little hint of flavor.
- 6. Chop it up into a Salsa** – Make a watermelon, feta, and red onion salsa with olive oil and balsamic vinegar. This is a tasty and refreshing topping on grilled chicken or white fish or paired with whole grain tortilla chips.
- 7. Make Watermelon Popsicles** – blend watermelon with fresh lime juice or a little limeade and freeze for homemade popsicles.
- 8. Grill it** – try grilling slices of watermelon drizzled with honey, lime juice, and olive oil whisked together.
- 9. Dehydrate it** – use a dehydrator or your oven to make watermelon jerky!
- 10. Top your Salad** – dice fresh watermelon into small chunks and use as a topping to your garden salad with an oil-and-vinegar based dressing.

Attachments:

- Sip Smarter (American Heart Association)
- **Recipes:** Watermelon Coco-Lime Smoothie; Fruit Infused Waters

References:

<https://health.gov/news-archive/blog/2016/08/caregivers-help-older-adults-stay-hydrated-during-summer/index.html>

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2908954/table/T1/>

https://www.europeanhydrationinstitute.org/nutrition_and_beverages

<https://fruitsandveggies.org/stories/top-10-ways-enjoy-watermelon/>

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<https://www2.illinois.gov/aging/programs/nutrition/Pages/nutrition.aspx>