

How to Get the Fluid You Need

Barix Clinics

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Water is number 1; the most important nutrient. You need it to survive and to thrive. After weight loss surgery, when gulping is replaced with sipping, it is more important than ever to monitor your fluid intake. When you get the right amount of fluid, you feel better and your body can function at its peak.



Signs You're Not Getting Enough

Water helps blood circulate, supplies nutrients and removes waste, and keeps your temperature regulated. When you don't get enough, you can see signs of dehydrations like dry mouth, fatigue, thirst, decreased urine output, dry skin, headache, constipation, and dizziness. If you don't pay attention, dehydration can become a medical emergency.

Even More Important After Weight Loss Surgery

After weight loss surgery, it is even more important to monitor fluid intake during summer months. Learning and remembering to sip water throughout the day rather than gulping a large glass all at once can be challenging. Most people become more active after weight loss surgery too and may have a hard time gauging the amount of fluid they need. By the time you feel thirsty, you're already on your way to dehydration, so you want to be proactive with fluid intake.

Don't wait until you are thirsty to drink.

How Much Do You Need?

Although water requirements vary from person to person, 8-8 ounce glasses a day is a good starting and adjust from there. You may need more if you are younger, have more muscle tissue, and exercise intensely. The color of urine may be the best indicator of adequate fluid intake—lemonade color or lighter is best.

The American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM) recommends drinking:

- 16 – 20 ounces of water two hours before moderate-intensity summer exercise
- 8 -12 ounces of water 10 – 15 minutes before going out in the heat
- 3 – 8 ounces of water every 15 – 20 minutes during activity when active for less than 60 minutes
- 3 – 8 ounces of a sports beverage every 15 – 20 minutes when exercising greater than 60 minutes

Fun Fact: Muscle is 70-75% water while fat is 10-40% water.

Getting Fluid In

Tips to stay hydrated this summer:

- Drink fluids throughout the day and evening.
- Limit alcohol.
- Eat fresh fruits and vegetables to boost fluid intake.
- Plan ahead and have a fluid source readily available at all times.
- Choose calorie-free fluids mostly.
- When temperatures rise, consider indoor exercise options, roller skating, ice skating, swimming, fitness centers, rock climbing studios.
- Wear lightweight, breathable clothing in light colors when exercising outdoors.
- Remember that hats and helmets trap heat and may cause your body to overheat quickly. Take breaks and remove periodically.
- Listen to your body -- take breaks if you start to feel light-headed, overheated or you get a headache. Don't ignore these warning signs.
- Be aware that with most things—too much of a good thing isn't good--it is possible to over-hydrate.

Flavor Water Naturally

Water is the best thing that we can drink. Add a hint of flavor with the infusion of natural fruit, veggies, herbs and spices for a special treat. It's easy, healthy, fresh and unprocessed and you can change up the flavors for a variety of delicious treats. Drinking infused water provides your body with a portion of the nutrients of the ingredients you use.

Infusion basics

Infused water is created by soaking fruit, veggies, herbs or spices in water. Over time, the water takes on the subtle flavors. You can use specially designed infusion pitchers, balls, or glasses or simply place your infusion ingredients in a glass or pitcher. Soak the ingredients in cold water for 3-4 hours

in the fridge. Remove the ingredients and enjoy. After the ingredients are removed, the infused water will stay fresh in the refrigerator for up to 3 days.

Cut rinds and skins off of ingredients and cut ingredients into thin slices or small cubes providing more surface area for quick dispersion of flavor. You may also want to crush some ingredients, especially fresh herbs and berries, to release more flavor, and then strain water prior to drinking. A wide variety of natural ingredients works well for infusion, including:

- Fresh herbs (crush or chop for more flavor): rosemary, thyme, mint, basil, cilantro, parsley
- Spices: cinnamon sticks, cardamom pods, fresh ginger, cloves, vanilla bean
- Fruit: berries, melon, tropical fruits, citrus, apples, pears, grapes, cherries
- Vegetables: cucumber, celery, fennel, carrots
- Tea: green tea, chamomile tea, herbal teas

As you get out and enjoy activities this summer, make sure to be mindful to drink enough fluid throughout the day to allow your body to function at its best.