



HYDRATION CHALLENGE



Being well hydrated can help you work to your full potential, feel healthier, and feel more energised. This challenge helps to raise awareness of hydration guidelines and challenges you to increase your daily fluid intake over a month.



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INTRODUCTION

It is recommended that people should drink between 1.6 -2.0 liters of fluid per day.

That's about 8-10 200ml glasses each day. The Hydration challenge encourages employees to increase their daily fluid intake over a period of weeks.

The body needs water:

- To transport water-soluble nutrients to organs around the body.
- To transport toxins and waste products out of the body via urine.
- To send electrical messages between cells – for example, to allow organs to function, muscles to contract and relax, and eyes to focus on images.
- To control our body temperature.
- To digest food and drink.

Some of the symptoms of dehydration have a specific impact on a person's ability to work to their full potential. Symptoms of dehydration include, for example:

- Headache
- Fatigue and irritability
- Poor concentration levels
- Mental confusion
- Loss of appetite
- Dizziness
- Nausea
- Constipation
- Dark-coloured urine

Challenge details

The Hydration challenge aims to encourage you to gradually increase your fluid intake over a period of one month. The objective of this challenge is to increase the amount of water that you drink at home and at work and to monitor and consider the health benefits that this brings.

The challenge focuses on water, but remember that other healthier fluids such as no added sugar squashes, low fat milk or herbal teas also count towards daily fluid intake. However, high-sugar drinks should be limited, especially between meals.

Some tips to get you started

1. Get yourself a reusable water bottle. The larger the bottle the better.
2. Keep your water bottle with you at all times. Any time you forgot your water bottle, you may end chugging water at the end of the day to reach your goal. Always having your water bottle on hand can help prevent this.
3. Finish your goal water intake 2 hours or so before you go to bed. This is NOT to say don't drink water if you are thirsty after that, but hit your goal earlier in the day so you aren't chugging right before bed.
4. Make your water fun! After a while it can get boring drinking plain water. If want a little variety in your day, throw some citrus wedges or a few mint leaves in your water bottle overnight and strain them out in the morning.



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GUIDE FOR PARTICIPANTS

Your body is approximately 63% water:

The amount of water in our body will depend on our sex, age and amount of lean tissue (which contains more water than fat tissue).

In situations where someone is deprived of food, the body's metabolism adjusts so that it releases nutrients from the body stores. This means that the person 'digests' their own muscle and fat. With time, this results in the body 'wasting away'.

When the body is deprived of water, this has a very different, and a much more immediate, effect on the body because the body needs to use water in a variety of different ways. Water is needed:

- To transport water-soluble nutrients to organs around the body.
- To transport toxins and waste products out of the body via urine.
- To send electrical messages between cells – for example, to allow organs to function, muscles to contract and relax, and eyes to focus on images.
- To control our body temperature.
- To digest food and drink.

The amount we need is influenced by:

- Your size
- How much exercise we do
- The climate
- What you eat and drink

To keep yourself well hydrated during the day, it is best to drink little and often, rather than waiting until you are really thirsty and then drinking large quantities. Drinks that contain caffeine – such as tea, coffee and cola can act as mild diuretics. This means that they trigger the body to produce more urine, increasing fluid loss.

Drinking some of these drinks each day is fine, but they should be balanced with fluids that don't contain caffeine. Also, check the sugar content of your drinks and avoid drinking too many high-sugar drinks. Choose sugar-free versions instead.



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RECORD SHEET

Getting started – Week 1

Record how many glasses of water you drink during the time spent at work. You can use the record sheet for Week 1.

At the end of each day, note how you have been feeling during the day.

At the end of the week, calculate your average daily water consumption for the first week. You should be aiming to drink 4-6 glasses per day for the time you spend at work.

Weeks 2-4

In subsequent weeks, aim to increase your intake of water gradually, working towards the target of 8-10 glasses per day for the time you spend at work.

Continue to record how many glasses of water you drink at work each day. You can use the record sheets for Weeks 2-4.

At the end of each day, record how you have been feeling. Have there been any changes in your concentration level, feelings of fatigue, or irritability, for example?

Think about the reasons why you didn't drink more water. Discuss with your work colleagues ways around these problems.

Week 1	Number of glasses of water I drank during the working day	How I have been feeling today. For example: energy levels, concentration levels or mood
Monday		
Tuesday		
Wednesday		
Thursday		
Friday		
Saturday		
Sunday		
Weekly Average		



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RECORD SHEET

Week 2	Number of glasses of water I drank during the working day	How I have been feeling today. For example: energy levels, concentration levels or mood
Monday		
Tuesday		
Wednesday		
Thursday		
Friday		
Saturday		
Sunday		
Weekly Average		
Changes from week 1 How many glasses more (or less) did you drink this week compared to Week 1?		



HYDRATION CHALLENGE RECORD SHEET

Week 3	Number of glasses of water I drank during the working day	How I have been feeling today. For example: energy levels, concentration levels or mood
Monday		
Tuesday		
Wednesday		
Thursday		
Friday		
Saturday		
Sunday		
Weekly Average		
Changes from week 2 How many glasses more (or less) did you drink this week compared to Week 2?		



HYDRATION CHALLENGE RECORD SHEET

Week 4	Number of glasses of water I drank during the working day	How I have been feeling today. For example: energy levels, concentration levels or mood
Monday		
Tuesday		
Wednesday		
Thursday		
Friday		
Saturday		
Sunday		
Weekly Average		
Changes from week 3 How many glasses more (or less) did you drink this week compared to Week 3?		