

Summer Wellness Challenge



Water Your Way to Health this Summer! Activities for Elementary, Middle and High School

Summer is in full swing and we're enjoying longer days, beautiful weather and for kids... no school! This leaves us with more time for outdoor fun, a crucial commodity when remaining safer at home these days. While taking extra precautions to stay healthy, it's important to remember the basics, such as staying hydrated.

Water makes up more than half our body weight and is essential for keeping our bodies working properly ([see graphic](#)). Although a child's body is comprised of more water than an adult body (78% at birth vs. 60% adult male),¹ kids are more prone to dehydration. This is because their bodies don't cool down as efficiently, a result of generating more heat but less sweat. Therefore, it's especially important for kids to drink enough water and eat foods high in water content.

So how much water is enough? The amount of water a child needs depends on their age, size and level of activity. In general, children under 8 years of age should drink at least 4–6 glasses of water daily. For children older than 8 years of age, a minimum of 6–8 glasses are recommended.²

Active kids will need extra water. It is recommended they drink 30 minutes before an activity and every 15–20 minutes during the activity.³ Drinking water after sports and play is equally important. If you're a caregiver, set mandatory water breaks rather than wait for a child to tell you they are thirsty.

Creative Ways to Get More Water

Kids are more likely to drink water if they see their parents drink water. However, sometimes we all need a twist to make water more tempting. Try these out:

- Use a [Water Tracker](#). For younger kids, you can design a Water Reward Chart or add "finish my water" to a reward chart that you're already using.
- Try some of the tips from [Recipes to Make Water More Fun](#).⁴
- Keep water handy:
 - Stock your refrigerator with water so it's easy to grab chilled water anytime.
 - Carry a reusable water bottle with you everywhere and refill often.
 - Let your kids choose their own water bottle.
- Infuse water with flavor by adding slices of fresh lemon, cucumber, berries or watermelon. You can also use herbs, such as mint, or spices like ginger.
- Use frozen fruit in place of ice cubes. On hot days, add frozen fruit to your water bottle so water will stay cold and refreshing.
- For younger children, try using a crazy straw or whimsical cup to make drinking water more fun.
- For those with phones, set a reminder so you are prompted to hydrate. Try an App which helps you keep track of your water intake:
 - Water Reminder Daily Tracker – iPhone and Android
 - Plant Nanny – iPhone and Android
 - Water Buddy – iPhone
 - Hydro – Android

¹ https://www.usgs.gov/special-topic/water-science-school/science/water-you-water-and-human-body?qt-science_center_objects=0#qt-science_center_objects

² <https://healthy-kids.com.au/parents/children-hydration/>

³ <http://www.safekidsoregon.org/kids-at-greater-risk-for-dehydration-during-summer/>














⁴ <https://choosehealthla.com/refresh/>

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Eat Your Water

Sometimes it's challenging to drink enough water. The good news is that you don't have to! There are many foods, mainly fruits and vegetables, that contain large amounts of water. Try these hydrating foods which are at least 90% water by weight:⁵

Baby Carrots 	Celery 	Iceberg Lettuce 
Broccoli 	Cucumber 	Radishes 
Cantaloupe 	Grapefruit 	Spinach 
Cauliflower 	Green Pepper 	Strawberries 
Watermelon 		

Is Sugar Hiding in Your Drink?

Become a nutrition sleuth! Added sugars go by many names, so often they're not easy to detect on an ingredients list. In addition to sugar, be on the lookout for these items:

Sucrose

Dextrose

Fructose

Honey

Syrup

Corn syrup

High-fructose corn syrup

Fruit juice concentrates

⁵ <https://www.health.com/nutrition/15-foods-that-help-you-stay-hydrated>

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Picture It: Science Experiment

Oftentimes it's easier to understand a concept through a visualization. This is especially true for younger children. Below is an easy way to demonstrate the effects dehydration has on the body.

Cut a potato in half and place each half flat-side down in a small dish of water. Add a tablespoon of salt to the water of one dish, but not the other. Check the potatoes in three hours. What do you see? Why did the salty potato shrivel? Discuss how this potato experiment relates to our own bodies? Another option is to compare a grape to a raisin.

Other resources:

- LiveWell Kids Recipes: <https://www.bchd.org/lwk-recipes>
- LiveWell Kids at Home: Water
https://www.bchd.org/docs/ys/lwk/nutrition/HomeTips/LWK_NUTR_M4_Athometips_2017-18.pdf
- Rethink Your Drink: <https://cachampionsforchange.cdph.ca.gov/en/tips/Pages/Rethink-Your-Drink.aspx>
- Choose Health LA: <https://choosehealthla.com/refresh/>

For more information visit www.bchd.org/summerchallenge. Share your family completing the challenges on social media using #BeachCitiesSummerChallenge.