

Hydration & Special Circumstances

Some circumstances, such as endurance activity, pregnancy and breast-feeding, and illness require extra hydration, while a few health conditions may actually require that you limit your intake of fluids.

Endurance Activity

“Start hydrating the day before strenuous exercise. Producing lots of clear, dilute urine is a good indicator that you’re well hydrated.”¹ Two hours before an

endurance event such as a marathon or half-marathon, drink 2 cups of water. During the activity, replenish fluids at regular intervals, and continue

drinking water or other fluids after you’re finished.¹ “Drinking 16 ounces of fluid per pound of body weight lost during exercise is recommended.”²

“Keep in mind that drinking too much cannot only cause bloating and discomfort, it may lead to a potentially fatal condition in which your blood sodium becomes too low (hyponatremia). This condition occurs when you drink more fluids than you lose through sweating.”¹ “During long bouts of intense exercise, it’s best to use a sports drink that contains sodium, as this will help replace sodium lost in sweat and reduce the chances of developing hyponatremia....”²

Pregnancy & Breast-feeding

“Women who are expecting or breast-feeding need additional fluids to stay hydrated. Large amounts of

fluid are lost especially when nursing. The Institute of Medicine recommends that pregnant women drink 2.4 liters (about 10 cups) of fluids daily and women who breast-feed consume 3.0 liters (about 12.5 cups) of fluids a day.”²



Illness & Health Conditions

“Signs of illnesses, such as fever, vomiting and diarrhea, cause your body to lose additional fluids. In these cases, you should drink more water and may even need oral rehydration solutions, such as Gatorade, Powerade or Ceralyte.”² “Start giving extra water or an oral rehydration solution at the first signs of illness — don’t wait until dehydration occurs. And although they might sound appealing, traditional “clear fluids” such as ginger ale or other sodas contain too much sugar and too little sodium to replenish lost electrolytes.”¹

“Certain conditions, including bladder infections or urinary tract stones, also require increased water intake. On the other hand, certain conditions such as heart failure and some types of kidney, liver, and adrenal diseases may impair excretion of water and even require that you limit your fluid intake.”² Talk with your doctor about meeting your hydration needs under these circumstances.

Sources:

1. Mayo Clinic (2005). Dehydration. Retrieved August 24, 2006. From <http://mayoclinic.com/health/dehydration/DS00561>.
2. Mayo Clinic (2006). Water: How much should you drink every day? Retrieved August 24, 2006. From <http://mayoclinic.com/health/water/NU00283>.