



# Pick Up A Hydration Habit

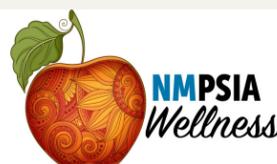
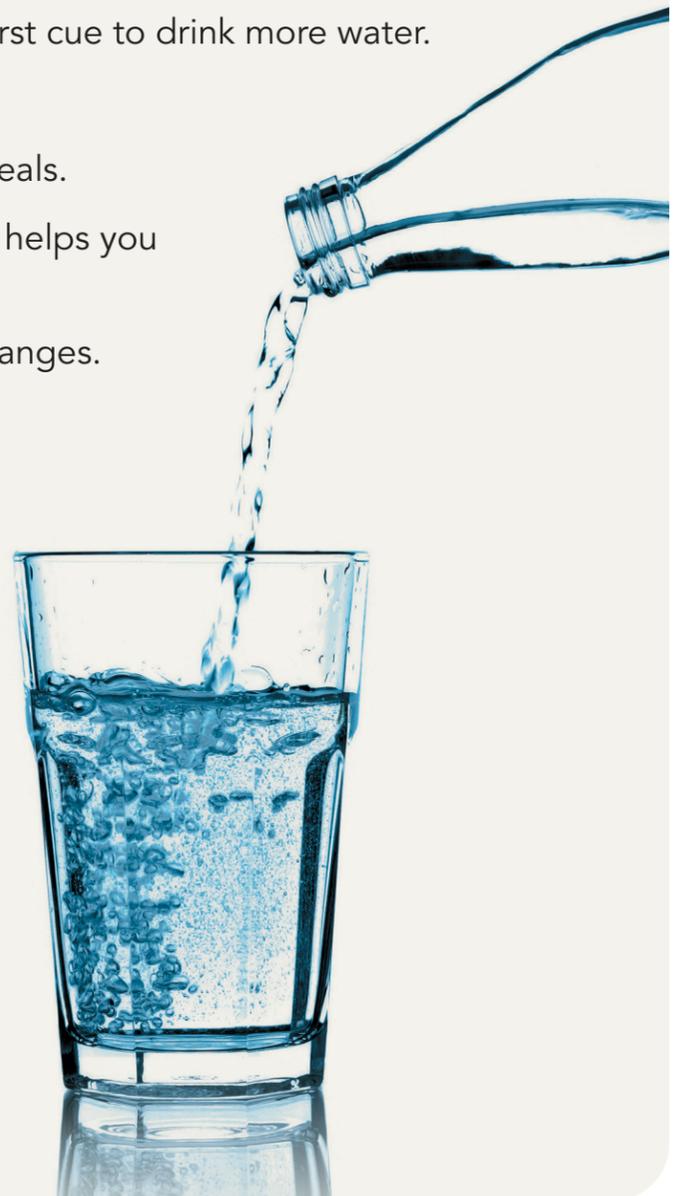
The human body is made up of about 60% water, which is one of the most important elements to human survival and is crucial for life. Adequate hydration helps keep all the systems of the body functioning well and supports energy levels, brain function, cardiovascular health, and muscle and joint function.

Many of us come up short in meeting our bodies' needs for daily water consumption. The effects of inadequate hydration can range from mild to severe, and severe dehydration can even be fatal. So getting into the habit of hydrating is important, especially in dry/arid environments!

There are many factors that impact how much water your body needs – including your age, gender, physical activity level, whether you live in a hot, humid or dry area, and your overall health. The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics provides guidelines of adequate intake levels for generally healthy people based on age and gender. They estimate that women need about 11.5 cups of water per day, while men need about 15.5 cups per day. These estimates include fluids consumed from both foods and beverages. On average, we typically get about 20% of the water our bodies need from the foods we eat. Therefore, when food consumption is factored in, women need to drink 9 cups of fluid daily and men need to drink about 12.5 cups of fluid daily.

## Here are some ways to give your hydration a boost and increase your water intake:

- If you are feeling thirsty, drink water. Listening to our bodies is our first cue to drink more water.
- Choose water over soda or other sugar sweetened beverages.
- Drink water throughout the day; with meals as well as in between meals.
- Keep water nearby in a refillable water bottle. Invest in a bottle that helps you track how much water you drink.
- Want some variety? Add some fresh citrus such as lemon, lime or oranges. Try cucumber slices, berries or fresh basil leaves.
- Consume fruits and vegetables with high water content.



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