



# DAY 02 - WATER CHALLENGE

## LIVE THE FLOURISHING LIFE: FLOURISHING FITNESS

Water constitutes up to 70% of your body and plays a key role in nearly all of its functions. Yet you can lose as much as 14% of your body water during rigorous exercise, so it's crucial to replenish it. In helping you to increase your water intake, today's challenge will benefit your overall health as well as your fitness.

### WATER & ATHLETIC PERFORMANCE

There are several key ways in which staying hydrated will support your athletic performance:

- Water is crucial in regulating your body temperature, making it particularly important when exercising.
- Other significant functions of water for fitness include carrying nutrients and oxygen to your cells, stabilising your heartbeat and blood pressure, maintaining your electrolyte balance and cushioning your joints.
- Drinking water protects you against the physical effects of dehydration including reduced endurance, increased fatigue and headaches.
- Mild dehydration can also decrease motivation and increase the perceived effort of physical activity.

### WATER & HEALTH

Water has a number of broader benefits for your physical health which will support you in your fitness journey. It plays a significant part in almost all physiological functions including digestion, cleansing your bladder and protecting your organs and tissues. Insufficient water can compromise gastrointestinal, kidney and heart functions, and skin health. It increases your risk of kidney stones, urinary and colon cancers, and mitral valve prolapse. If your weight is important for your exercise, drinking more water and less of other beverages (including diet sodas, juice and milk) can also help in reducing your overall energy intake. Proper hydration is also crucial for your mental and cognitive health. A lack of it disrupts your mood and normal cognitive functions such as concentration, alertness and short-term memory. It can also directly impact your cognitive performance in perceptual discrimination, arithmancy, visuomotor tracking and psychomotor skills.

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### STAYING HYDRATED

On average, adults need two to three litres of water per day, but this varies greatly based on your individual needs. If you exercise a lot, have a health condition or are on medication, talk to your doctor about how your needs might be affected.

Today's challenge is to replace all your beverages with water. This is a great practice, as water is certainly the healthiest option. However, keep in mind that all beverages contribute to your daily intake. That includes coffee and alcohol, but their diuretic effect somewhat lessens their contribution to your fluid consumption. Additionally, foods contribute approximately 20% of your daily water needs.

Here are some tips for making sure you're getting the water your body needs to function at its maximum potential:

- Take it slow. Water is best taken in gradually throughout the day, so keep a bottle on hand whenever you can and take regular sips.
- Remind yourself. If you often forget to drink water, try to have a glass at milestones throughout the day, such as meals, snacks and when you take medicine. You could also try an app to remind you and help you keep track of your intake.
- Eat your water. Increase your intake of water-rich foods such as fruits and vegetables—these are great for your overall nutrition as well as your hydration.
- Drink before, during and after exercise. This is important as you lose significant amounts of body water through sweat.