



Healthy Habits - Simplified

Part 1

Welcome

Thanks for signing up, we're so glad you've joined us.

This is the first of 5 weekly lectures that will make up the course.

Our goal is to help you develop some general healthy habits that *everyone* can benefit from.

Each week we'll tackle a different topic and you'll receive information that our experts have put together for you. Importantly, along with this information, you'll receive the "how-to" through a series of challenges.

The weekly challenges will be achievable and, by taking part, you will be teaching yourself to succeed, an *essential* part of learning any healthy habit.

We ask that you bear with us, even if your challenge for the week doesn't go as planned (and this happens), please trust us and keep going until the end.

Ready? Unsure? Don't worry, either way the course will have everything you'll need for a successful journey.

If, as we go, you have queries, please get in touch at coaching@upforit.co.za

We're kicking off slowly, the first topic is one of the basics. Jump right in below.

Can drinking more water really change your life?



We've all heard a thousand times that having 8 glasses of water a day is a must. This week, we'll look into why, how, and what counts? We'll explore how drinking more water really can change your life, help you work out how much water you need and give you some tips to help you get there.

The basics

Water is *essential for human life*, second only to oxygen, and it is the most important nutrient in the human diet because about two thirds of our bodies consist of water. This makes it *critical for almost every bodily process*, [click here](#) for some examples. You could potentially go for over a month without food but not for more than 3 days without water.

Staying hydrated is important for optimal health and wellbeing at every level. *Dehydration, on the other hand, can lead to a range of problems* such as:

- Tiredness, brain fog, difficulty concentrating
- Dizziness, light-headedness
- Headaches
- Decreased urine output or very dark urine
- Excessive thirst, dry mouth or dry eyes
- Muscle weakness
- Serious kidney problems

And the list goes on...

How much water should I have?

Everyone has *individualised needs* for water, but a *good rule of thumb* is around 1.5 - 2 litres a day for adults, and slightly less for children depending on weight and age.

Tip

A good way to check if you're drinking enough water is to check the colour of your urine, if you're drinking enough it should be a pale straw colour.

Dark urine may indicate dehydration but some supplements, such as Vitamin B, and foods, such as Beetroot, can stain urine for an hour or two, so don't be alarmed if that's the case.

Keep in mind that other factors, for example hot weather, pregnancy, and high levels of physical activity, all increase the amount required.

What counts as "Water"?

Everyone needs some pure water every day but the following can also count towards your recommended daily intake:

- Vegetables with a high water content, like tomatoes
- Herbal teas
- Broths and other liquids

Work out YOUR requirements

The recommended daily intake of pure water is 30ml per kg of body weight. To estimate how much water you should drink, simply multiply your weight in kilograms by 30. This will give you the number of millilitres which you can then divide by 1000 to convert to litres.

E.g. For a 60kg adult: $60\text{kg} \times 30\text{ml}$, gives us 1800ml. This divided by 1000 gives us an aim of 1.8 litres a day.

If you consume a lot of the other foods and beverages which "count" as water this will make up some of your intake, so aim for about 15-20ml of pure water per kg of body weight daily.

Why do most of us struggle?

1. Forgetfulness - sometimes it just slips our minds
2. Taste - some love it, some hate it
3. Some believe that the soft drinks, tea, coffee or even alcohol that they have is good enough.

We'll circle back to solutions for point 1 and 2 later but it's important to note that the beverages mentioned in point 3 *should not count* towards your daily water intake. They tend to be dehydrating, meaning that if you consume these beverages you might actually need to add a bit more water to your daily intake!

What advice do we have to help?

Tip

Alcohol is dehydrating. We're not saying don't have it, but if you do, remember to have at least one glass of water for every alcoholic beverage you consume.

It won't stop the 'effect' of the alcohol, but it will help you to avoid dehydration - one of the reasons for waking up with a sore head.

1. If it's an issue of taste:

Add some mint or a small slice of lemon or orange to your water. You can also watch [this video](#) for some great water infusion ideas.

Fun Fact

Adding fruit to tap water, and letting it stand for about 30 minutes, helps to get rid of most of the chlorine and chloramine used by municipalities and others to disinfect tap water.
[Click here for more info.](#)

2. Turn it into a habit:

- Be conscious of what you drink each day
- Always have water with you to sip throughout the day
- Start with one glass a day and work up from there
- Set a goal e.g. fill a water bottle in the morning to be finished by the end of the day, or set a reminder on your phone to have 2 sips of water every half hour
- Divide it into manageable portions: if your goal is 3 glasses a day, have one with breakfast, one with lunch, and one with dinner
- Find a buddy - get a friend or colleague to join you in the challenge and help each other to stay motivated.

What's in it for you?

To name just a few examples, staying hydrated may help you to:

- Feel more 'alive'
- Increase mental clarity and performance
- Give you more energy - bye-bye fatigue
- Reduce muscle cramps and fatigue
- Improve sleep
- Prevent dry skin, wrinkles and premature aging
- Prevent constipation, headaches, and joint pains
- Flush your body of toxins
- Prevent UTIs (Urinary Tract Infections)
- Improve the regulation of body temperature
- Prevent hunger and overeating
- Improve high blood pressure and heart disease if dehydration is a complicating factor
- Improve allergies and health conditions that respond positively to increased water intake
- 'Burn' fat, build muscle and lose weight

Tip

Studies show drinking water 30 minutes before eating leads to greater satiety at mealtimes - helping us to eat less, and so potentially helping with weight loss.

Take this a step further by adding some apple cider vinegar - it appears to have positive effects on blood sugar, insulin and weight loss, and it feeds the 'good bugs' in your gastrointestinal tract.

The Challenge: To Stay hydrated

Ok, you probably saw this one coming, and maybe you're thinking: "Well sure, but how?"

We'll narrow it down.

Step 1:

Let's be REALISTIC. You've done the exercise above to work out how much water you should be having, but if you're currently managing 2 glasses a day and now you need to start having 1.8 litres, well, this could be a bit intimidating.

That leads us to ...

Step 2:

Personalise the challenge to suit you. Make it something that's *specific, measurable, relevant and achievable* for you in the *timeframe* you are working in. Figure out where you're starting from and think about how you can increase your water intake in steps that you'll find manageable.

Once you've done this, fill in your personalised goal in the challenge statement below and let's do this!

"Each day this week I will drink _____ more glass(es) of water than I usually would."

As an example, our team has agreed to "drink 1 more glass of water than they usually would."

We think this is a manageable challenge for us, those who really struggle will go from the usual 1 glass to having 2 every day, while those who're already having 6 will go to 7.

If you think that our version of this challenge suits YOU, please join us! If not, then set your own version of this goal; if you think you'll only manage an extra half a glass each day, then go for it.

REMEMBER the tips and infusion recipes we mentioned earlier and use them to your advantage.

I already do this!

If you're reading this and thinking "I've done the calculations and I'm already getting my recommended daily amount of water", that's great!

Our challenge for you then is: Where some of us will be trying to increase the amount of water we're having, you could challenge yourself to be mindful of what else you're drinking and try to decrease the amount of "dehydrating" drinks you have each day.

For example, if you find you're having 3 cups of coffee a day, try go down to 2 and log how you feel. Are you feeling any different? Better or worse? Try to be mindful of the effects of the different beverages on your body. Keep in mind that, if you are cutting down on caffeinated drinks you may also experience withdrawal symptoms at the start.

We'd love to help, get in touch with us at coaching@upforit.co.za



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