



# Got Water?

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## Increasing Your H<sub>2</sub>O Intake for Overall Health

Water intake and fluid balance are among the least understood and most neglected areas of overall health and weight management. Because water is very important to health, our bodies attempt to maintain proper fluid and water balance at all times.

Consuming too little water can result in water retention. Increasing water intake can actually decrease water retention, as well as bloating and added weight that accompany it.

### How much water do I need?

Although individual variation exists, drinking 1/2 your body weight in ounces—up to 8 glasses for most patients each day—can help you achieve your health goals.

### Won't I feel more bloated and retain more if I drink more water?

Drinking the appropriate amount of water actually reduces water retention and bloating, even during menstruation for women. Since your body is constantly regulating its fluid balance, you can overcompensate by retaining water if you are not drinking enough. Drinking more water can also help you lose those few extra pounds and aid with proper digestion.

### What if I'm too busy to keep track of how much water I drink?

Here are a few tips to help you drink the amount of water you need:

- Keep a water bottle that measures fluid ounces at home or at your desk. This way the counting is done for you. All you need to worry about is finishing the bottle between the time you wake up and the time you go to bed. If a 64-oz. bottle appears too much to tackle, try a 32-oz. or 16-oz. bottle and just remember to refill it throughout the day.
- Keep post-it notes on your refrigerator or desk reminding you to drink a glass of water.
- Create a buddy system with a family member, friend, or co-worker to make sure you are drinking your water.
- Add lemon, orange, or lime slices to your water to give it flavor.

Remember to take baby steps and gradually work up to your goal of half your weight in ounces. It's never too late to start—this is for your long-term health!