Requirements to Complete this HEALTH CHALLENGE™

1. Keep a mental or written record of how many glasses of water you drink each day. Record this number on your monthly Health Challenge™ Calendar.

2. Read “Why water is important for your health” below.

3. To complete the Challenge, drink 6 to 8+ glasses of water on at least 22 days this month.

4. Keep the record of your completed Challenge if your organization requires documentation.

What is a serving?
A serving is 1 cup or 8 ounces of water. Caffeinated and alcoholic beverages are not recommended for hydration. They have a diuretic affect and don’t have the same benefit as water.

Why water is important for your health
The body is made up of 55% to 75% water (72% in young adults). All nutrients are carried in a water medium. Metabolic wastes are also carried and excreted in a water medium. Water is essential for a healthy functioning body!

Water helps…
- Keep the skin soft and beautiful
- Keep the body cool and operating at peak efficiency
- Prevent fatigue
- Improve physical performance (muscles are 73% water)
- Improve the circulation (blood is 82% water)
- Improve mental function (the brain is 72% water)
- The kidneys purify the blood and remove wastes
If water levels are not adequate, a variety of serious health problem can occur, including headaches, constipation, kidney stones, and impaired circulation. In hot conditions, heat exhaustion and heat stroke can occur with physical exertion. Just how much water the body needs is not fully understood but most health organizations recommend 6 to 8 glasses per day—even more for hot conditions, high altitudes, and increased activity level. Foods high in water such as fruit juices, fruit, and soups can help supply some of the body’s need for liquid, but you still need adequate water. A simple rule to see if you are drinking enough water is to check your urine. If it’s dark and smells, you need more water. If it’s nearly clear, you are doing great.

Let’s look at the evidence of how water protects the health:

1. Adequate water reduces the risk for certain cancers
   The department of nutrition at Harvard University studied the relationship between water intake and risk of bladder cancer in 47,909 healthy men. After 10 years of observation they found that men who drank 6 or more glasses of water daily cut their risk of bladder cancer in half compared to men who drank very little water. Drinking plenty of water is one good way to keep the kidneys and bladder in good health.

2. Adequate water reduces the risk of heart attack and stroke
   When a person doesn’t drink adequate water, the blood becomes thicker, sluggish, and more likely to clot. Loma Linda University looked at water intake and the risk of heart attacks in 20,297 people. They found that, compared to those who drank 2 glasses of water a day, women who drank at least 5 glasses of water a day cut their risk of a heart attack by 41%; the risk was reduced 54% in men. This is a remarkable difference. One positive way to prevent a heart attack is to drink plenty of water. They also found that soda pop and coffee did not have this same protective effect.

3. Water improves physical performance
   Sports medicine researchers have studied fluid intake and physical performance. Getting adequate fluids improves performance and decreases fatigue, cramps, and heat exhaustion. In moderate activity, drink a glass of water every 30 minutes. In heavy exercise, plan on drinking about a liter of water for...
every 1000 exercise calories expended. In physical endurance events (90+ min), sport drinks with electrolytes seem to be beneficial and help keep the body hydrated even better than water.

Can a person drink too much water?
It doesn’t happen often, but yes, you can. Just because adequate water is important for your health, doesn’t mean drinking twice as much is always better. Too much water dilutes the body’s electrolytes and can cause serious problems. People have even been hospitalized for drinking too much water.

Ways to increase your water intake
- Drink in the morning when you first get up, in the evening when you get home, and again before going to bed at night.
- Drink before any physical activity such as walking, hiking, or biking. Drink at least every half hour during your activity as well.
- Keep a bottle of water beside your desk at work. Drink often throughout the day.
- Drink before your meals. Water can help diminish appetite if trying to lose weight.
- Carry water with you when traveling. Drink often when flying, as the air is very dry.
- Drink water in place of caffeinated beverages and alcohol, which are diuretics.
- If your water doesn’t taste good, filter your water and keep a pitcher in the fridge or buy bottled water. Add a lemon slice or lime to your water to improve the flavor.

References:

MyPyramid Food Guide

GRAINS
Eat 6 oz or 6 servings every day
- Eat at least 3 oz (3 servings) of whole-grain cereals, breads, crackers, rice, or pasta daily
- 1 oz is about 1 slice of bread, 1 cup of breakfast cereal, or ½ cup of cooked brown rice, whole grain cereal, or pasta

VEGETABLES
Eat 2½ cups or 5 servings every day
- Eat more dark leafy greens like broccoli and spinach
- Eat more orange vegetables like carrots and sweet potatoes
- Eat more dry beans (peas, pinto beans, kidney beans, and lentils)
- A serving is: ½ cup cooked, 1 cup salad or raw veggies

FRUITS
Eat 2 cups or 4 servings every day
- Eat a variety of fruit
- Choose fresh, frozen, canned, or dried fruit
- Get most of your fruit from whole fruits, not juices
- A serving is: 6 oz fruit juice, 1 medium fruit, ½ cup cooked

FATS, SUGARS & SALT (SODIUM)
- Get most of your fat sources from vegetable oils, nuts, avocados, and fish.
- Limit solid fats like butter, stick margarine, shortening, and lard, as well as foods that contain these.
- Choose food and beverages low in added sugars. Added sugars contribute calories with few, if any nutrients.
- Eat plenty of dietary fiber: 25 g/day for women, and 38 g/day for men.
- Limit sodium to less than 2,400 mg/day—1,500 mg/day if your blood pressure is high.
- Check nutrition labels to keep sodium, saturated fats, and trans fats low.

MILK & DAIRY
Drink/eat 2–3 servings every day
- Choose low-fat or fat-free milk, yogurt, cheese and other milk products
- If you don’t or can’t consume milk, choose lactose-free products or other calcium sources such as soymilk and other foods and beverages fortified with calcium and vitamin B-12
- A serving is: 1 cup milk, yogurt, fortified soymilk, or low-fat cheese; ½ cup low-fat cottage cheese

MEAT & BEANS (PROTEINS)
Eat 5½ ounces or 3–5 servings every day
- Emphasize plant proteins—choose beans (pinto beans, kidney beans, lentils, soy, split peas, hummus, etc.) tofu, vegetable protein, peas, nuts, and seeds
- Choose fish and low-fat or lean meats and poultry
- Bake or broil instead of frying meat
- A serving is: 1 oz nuts or seeds; ½ cup beans, peas, lentils; 1–2 oz lean meats; 1 egg

If you are very active, choose the larger serving recommendations.

Recommendations from USDA MyPyramid (MyPyramid.gov) and NIH DASH diet
**Health Challenge™ Calendar**

**Drink Plenty of Water Daily**

**Instructions**
1. Post this record sheet where you will see it daily (bathroom, kitchen, bedroom, etc.).
2. Record the number of 8 oz. glasses of water you drink each day. Use this calendar to also record your exercise program (min/day), weekly weight, and any other items you may want to track.
3. At the end of the month, total the number of days you drank 6 to 8+ glasses of water. You must meet this goal at least 22 days out of the month to complete the Challenge. Then keep up this healthy practice for a lifetime of good health!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUNDAY</th>
<th>MONDAY</th>
<th>TUESDAY</th>
<th>WEDNESDAY</th>
<th>THURSDAY</th>
<th>FRIDAY</th>
<th>SATURDAY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HC</td>
<td>HC</td>
<td>HC</td>
<td>HC</td>
<td>HC</td>
<td>HC</td>
<td>HC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ex. min.</td>
<td>ex. min.</td>
<td>ex. min.</td>
<td>ex. min.</td>
<td>ex. min.</td>
<td>ex. min.</td>
<td>ex. min.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HC</td>
<td>HC</td>
<td>HC</td>
<td>HC</td>
<td>HC</td>
<td>HC</td>
<td>HC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ex. min.</td>
<td>ex. min.</td>
<td>ex. min.</td>
<td>ex. min.</td>
<td>ex. min.</td>
<td>ex. min.</td>
<td>ex. min.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HC</td>
<td>HC</td>
<td>HC</td>
<td>HC</td>
<td>HC</td>
<td>HC</td>
<td>HC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ex. min.</td>
<td>ex. min.</td>
<td>ex. min.</td>
<td>ex. min.</td>
<td>ex. min.</td>
<td>ex. min.</td>
<td>ex. min.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HC</td>
<td>HC</td>
<td>HC</td>
<td>HC</td>
<td>HC</td>
<td>HC</td>
<td>HC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ex. min.</td>
<td>ex. min.</td>
<td>ex. min.</td>
<td>ex. min.</td>
<td>ex. min.</td>
<td>ex. min.</td>
<td>ex. min.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HC</td>
<td>HC</td>
<td>HC</td>
<td>HC</td>
<td>HC</td>
<td>HC</td>
<td>HC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ex. min.</td>
<td>ex. min.</td>
<td>ex. min.</td>
<td>ex. min.</td>
<td>ex. min.</td>
<td>ex. min.</td>
<td>ex. min.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

Number of days this month I drank 6 to 8+ glasses of water
Number of days this month I got 30+ minutes of physical activity such as brisk walking

Other wellness projects completed this month:

____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________

Signature ____________________________ Date ______________________

© 2008 Wellsource, Inc., Clackamas, OR • All rights reserved.
A new you.
BlueHealth Advantage
Small changes can make a big difference.

www.BlueHealthAdvantageNE.com