

Drinking water: an important way to stay properly hydrated!

Humans, and especially children, have to drink enough water to keep their bodies working well. Find out more inside...



Water makes up around 60 per cent* of the body. You lose water when you sweat, urinate and even breathe. To maintain the balance of water in your body, it is important to drink enough water to replace the water you lose.⁽¹⁾

Did you know?

The percentage of your body that is water decreases as you get older.



Water in the human body

Kidneys:

the main regulator of water losses. Make sure that you maintain your water balance. When you urinate, it is your kidneys getting rid of water and toxins that your body does not need.

Skin:

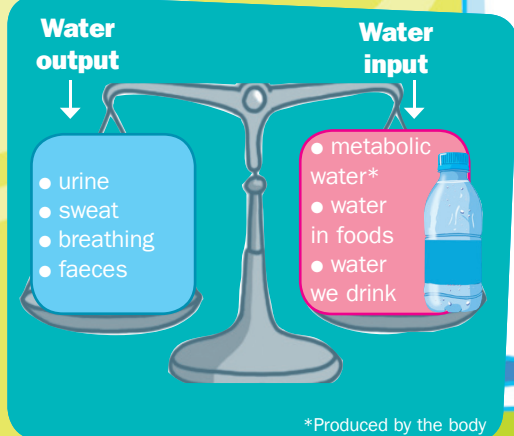
water evaporates through the pores in your skin when you sweat, lowering your temperature. Sweating is the body's way of keeping cool.

Digestive system:

drinking water helps your digestive system work properly.

Lungs:

you lose water through your lungs when you breathe.



Drinking and eating:

drinking water and eating fruit, vegetables and soup are good ways of making sure your body meets its water needs. Even if some foods are rich in water, from 40% to 80%, the water provided by food is not sufficient to meet our daily water needs.

Tip of the day



Wake up to water

You lose water in your sleep by breathing and sweating. It's a good idea to have water beside your bed so that you can drink water as soon as you wake up in the morning, or even if you wake up during the night. Drinking water in the morning hydrates your body and gives you a good start to the day. Drink water as part of a healthy breakfast every day. Milk gives you calcium and different nutrients, wholegrain cereals give you energy and fibre and fruit gives you vitamins.

* Body of an adult.

⁽¹⁾ Jéquier et al. Water as an essential nutrient: the physiological basis of hydration. Eur. J. Clin. Nut. 2010; 64, 115–123.

Advice for healthy hydration

Drink regularly throughout the day*

Children especially need to drink regularly because they have a larger surface area in comparison to their body weight than do adults, allowing for greater water losses from skin. Children are less tolerant of high climatic heat stress than adults.

*Casa et al, 2005; 4: 115-127. *Current Sports Medicine*

8 good times* to drink a glass⁽¹⁾ of water



* for a sedentary and healthy child living in a temperate climate
(1) 1 glass = 150 ml

Keeping enough water in your body

Drink water while you exercise

Don't let yourself get dehydrated if you're a gymnast, a football player or a ballerina! Athletes make sure they drink water before, during and after training. The muscles rely on minerals, too, which water helps to transport around the body in the blood.



Illustration: M.-H. Tran-Duc

Even joints need water to function properly



Illustration: M.-H. Tran-Duc

Water plays a lubricating role for your joints.

Low hydration – spotting the signs

Water is vital for life

Humans can last between 3 and 5 days without water, but you can get hypo-hydrated much more quickly than that. Here are some signs showing you that you might not have had enough to drink recently. The first sign is, of course, feeling thirsty. But feeling thirsty means you are already hypo-hydrated. Drink regularly, in small amounts, throughout the day. This is especially important for children because children don't have the same impulse to drink when they're thirsty as adults do.



Illustration: M.-H. Tran-Duc



Illustration: M.-H. Tran-Duc

Other signs of low hydration

If you feel tired even when you think you've had enough sleep, it might be because you are hypo-hydrated. Not drinking enough water can also cause dryness of mouth, headaches and lower urination. You may also feel weak or have muscle weakness. Dizziness is another sign, and, in serious cases, some people even faint.

Do a test!

You can check up on how well you are hydrated. Look at your urine. If it is dark-coloured, rather than pale yellow, that might mean you are not drinking enough water.



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Make sure you stay well hydrated

Keep your water balance

Think about how much water you're losing; if you're taking exercise or if it's hot, you'll sweat more so you'll need to drink more to replace the water you lose.

Drink when you sweat

Whatever sport you're doing, intense or more gentle, every activity makes you lose water. Make sure you drink some water before, during and afterwards... even a game of hide-and-seek or running a race with your friends can make you sweat!



Illustration: M.-H. Tran-Duc

Altitude makes you thirsty

If you're on a mountain, aim to drink more water than usual. You breathe more deeply, which means you lose more water than when you're at sea level.



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Plan ahead

When you go to school or play sports - or even go for a walk - bring a bottle of water with you. This will help you make sure you always have enough to drink. Drink some water before you leave. This way, you're making up for the water you'll lose when you sweat before you've even started!

Drink more when it's hot

When it's hot and sunny, you'll lose more water from sweating. Even when you're not running around, you will lose water, so make sure you keep topped up by drinking water regularly during the summer or if you visit a hot country.



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The tip of the day



Discover the pleasure of drinking water

You might think water is boring, but if you pay close attention to it, you will be surprised to see that all waters don't taste the same at all! There are even people whose job it is to taste water.

How to taste water?



1 Pour water into a clean glass. The glass should be about a third full.



2 Check that the water is clean by looking at it from above and from the side.

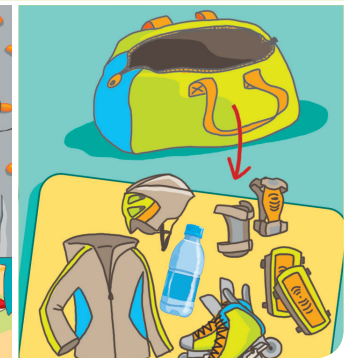


3 Place the glass under your nose and breathe deeply several times. Your sense of smell works better if you close your eyes.



4 Take a mouthful of water. Move it around inside your mouth, stop, wait and swallow. Now pay attention to all the sensations you have in your mouth and enjoy!

Hydration Unit Puzzles and Games



Yummy

How many snacks (2 biscuits, an apple and a glass of water) can Alex prepare?

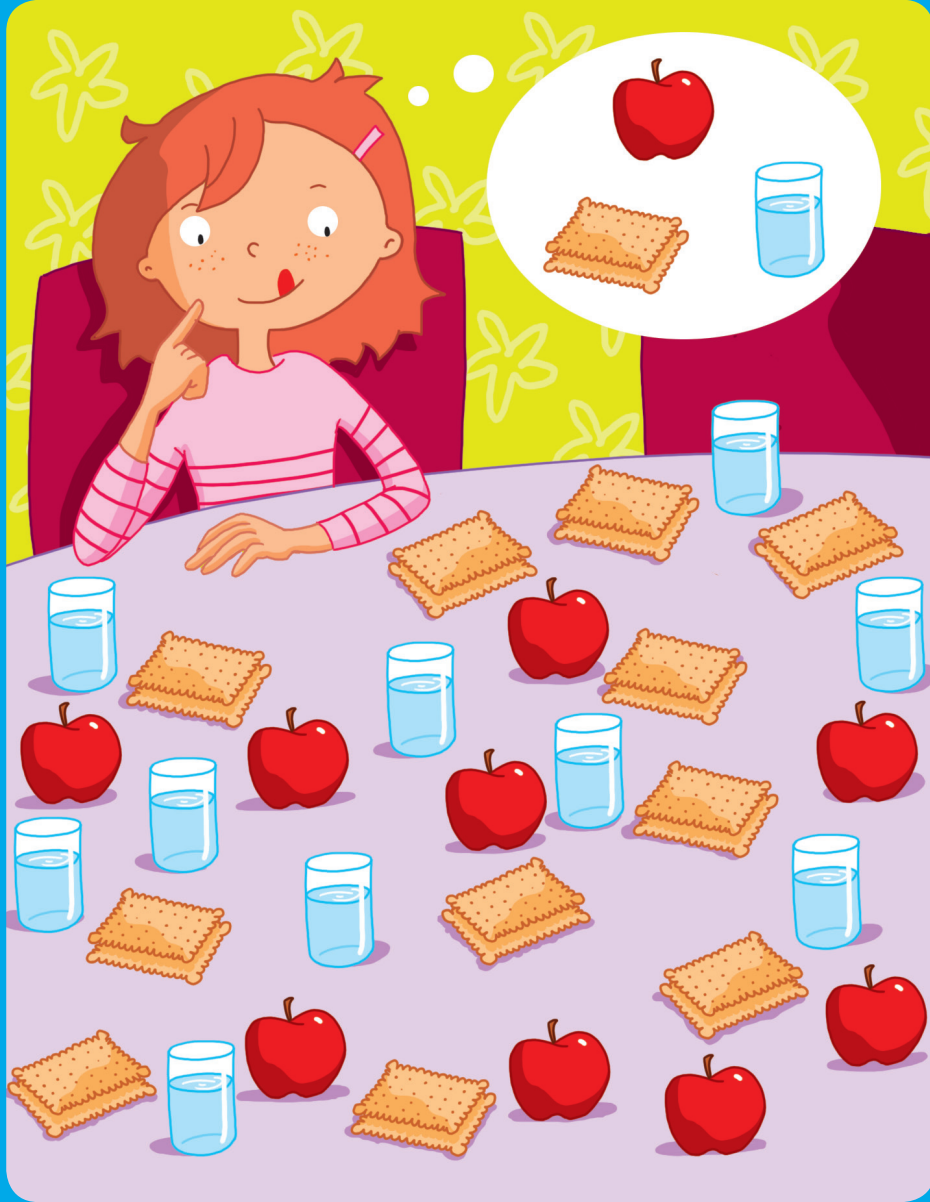


Illustration: M.-H. Tran-Duc

Answer: 9 complete snacks.

Puzzle

A piece of the puzzle has been lost. Which one?

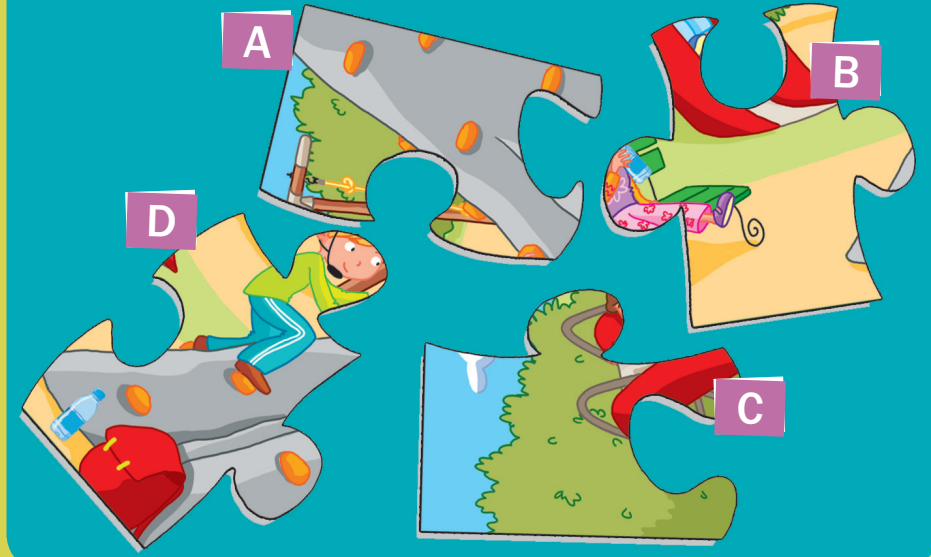


Illustration: M.-H. Tran-Duc

Answer: B.

Open your eyes!

What is the one object that's in all of these sports bags?



Answer: the bottle of water.

Illustration: M.-H. Tran-Duc

On the way

Find the path Alex needs to follow to get to the bottle of water. Be careful: he must pass through the 8 glasses* of water. This is what you need to drink⁽¹⁾ each day to stay in good shape.



Illustration: Maëlle Cheval

*1 glass = 150 mls

⁽¹⁾ The recommended daily amount of fluid is:

- 1 litre for 5 to 8 year olds
- 1.5 litres for 9 to 12 year olds
- 2 litres for 13+ years

Answer: C