



# STUDENT SERVICES

## Mental Health Monday

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### WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

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### HOW MUCH WATER SHOULD WE DRINK A DAY?

The NHS recommends consuming 6-8 glasses or cups a day, and it also includes lower fat milks, and low sugar or sugar-free drinks, tea and coffee within this intake.

Be mindful of added sugars or syrups in tea, coffee and soft drinks which will increase your overall sugar intake for the day.

You may also need more water if you are exercising or when the weather is hot, as we lose water through sweating. A good way to check if you are hydrated is by the color of your urine. Ideally, this should be a very pale yellow. If it is clear you could be drinking too much water, and if it is darker you need to drink more. When checking the color, be aware that some medications, supplements and some foods such as beetroot can also affect urine color.

### WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF DRINKING WATER?

Drinking enough water, or staying hydrated, is the first rule of health and nutrition. Our bodies can supposedly last weeks without food and yet just a few days without water. This makes sense when you think that our bodies are made up of about 60% water and that being dehydrated can begin to affect us both physically and mentally.

# Benefits

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## **It may improve memory and mood**

Research has shown that even mild dehydration can impair memory and mood in everyone from children to the elderly.

## **It can help reduce sugar cravings and aid weight maintenance**

The brain can't actually tell the difference between hunger and thirst, so often we can mistake thirst as a 'sugar craving'. The next time you feel the need for something sweet, try drinking a glass of water first. Staying hydrated may also help with weight maintenance. Research has shown that having water before a meal may fill you up more and therefore promote weight loss by eating less at the meal.

## **It may improve exercise performance**

There has been a lot of research into the effects of hydration or dehydration in athletes, and the results all pretty much conclude that dehydration not only affects sports performance but also physiological function too.

## **It may reduce headaches and migraines**

A lack of water may increase the risk of a headache or migraines in some individuals.

## **It may help prevent constipation in children and adults**

Water helps to 'keep things moving' in the digestive system, and so staying hydrated can help prevent constipation in children, adults and the elderly. There is some evidence that fizzy water may be of particular benefit too.

## **It may help to prevent kidney stones**

Poor hydration may increase the risk of developing or reoccurrence of kidney stones in some individuals.

## **It may help reduce the risk of bladder infections**

Some studies have shown that drinking more water can reduce the risk of bladder infections and urinary tract infections, such as cystitis, in women.

## **It may help to manage anxiety**

Hydration has an impact on the brain, as well as the body, and research has shown that even mild dehydration can have a negative impact on energy levels and moods, which may heighten the symptoms of anxiety.