

## Accessibility

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## Feedback

Our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) provides advice and support to patients, families, and carers, helping to resolve any problems, concerns, or complaints you may have.

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### Bladder and Bowel Service

## Fluid: why you need it and how to get enough

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If you drink a lot of tea and coffee it is best to reduce the amount gradually (by one cup per day) to help prevent withdrawal headaches.

The important thing to remember when you try to change any part of your diet is to make the change gradually.

If you don't drink enough fluid at the moment, start by having one or two extra drinks each day and then add in more as the days progress.

After two or three weeks you will have incorporated a healthy, permanent change into your lifestyle.

## Drinks that can irritate the bladder

Tea, coffee, green tea, and some soft drinks like cola contain caffeine which is a mild diuretic (makes you pass more urine). Drinking large amounts of these can lead to dehydration.

Caffeine makes it difficult for our bodies to absorb iron from our food so is best avoided directly after meals. Caffeine also irritates the lining of the bladder, giving the sensation you want to pass urine more frequently.

Other irritant drinks include hot chocolate, blackcurrant juice, citrus fruits and juices, tomatoes, all fizzy drinks and alcohol. These are best taken in moderation especially if you are having problems with your bladder.



## Drinking fluids

Fluid is essential for life. More than half of each of us is made up of water and if we do not replenish our supplies, we would survive for no more than a few days.

We need fluid to eliminate waste products from the body (in urine) and to replace losses from breathing and through sweat.

If we do not replace the lost fluid many bodily functions are affected, and we are in danger of becoming dehydrated. Fluid is obtained from drinks and from the foods we eat.



## What happens if I don't drink enough?

A lot of people do not realise they are dehydrated because they have become used to feeling below their best.

Dehydration can leave you feeling tired, nauseous, and often results in frequent headaches, constipation and, in some cases, urinary tract infections.

## How do I know if I am dehydrated?

A good way of judging if you are drinking enough is by the colour of your urine. It should be the colour of white wine. Any darker and you would probably benefit from drinking more fluids.

## How much fluid do I need?

Most of us need between 1.5 - 2.0 litres (3-4 pints) per day, which can be taken as different drinks, soups, yoghurts, etc. However, if you have been sweating more because it's hot or you have been exercising, your requirements will increase.



## What if I don't like drinking water?

You can make water more interesting by adding slices of lemon or lime, a little cordial or squash.



Try fruit or herb teas for an alternative hot drink. However, peppermint and green tea can also irritate the bladder.