

Fun Fact of the Week

The Best and Worst Drinks to Keep You Hydrated*

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Sick of water? Here's what else you should drink to hydrate...and what you shouldn't!

We all know we're supposed to drink lots of water. ([Here's what happens to your body when you drink those eight glasses a day.](#)) But that can be hard to do when water tastes so...watery. Luckily, it's possible to get hydration from a variety of drinks, but we have to be careful that we're not having too much of the ones that *dehydrate*.



That's right: Some liquids actually encourage more water to leave your body. Plus a lot of tasty drinks include too much of things you're looking to limit or cut out altogether, like sugar, carbs and a bunch of calories. Our list will help you determine which beverages are best for hydrating - and which to avoid.

Best Drinks for Hydration

Curious to see which beverages are the *best* for keeping enough fluid in you? The first three are hands-down your best hydrating choices; the rest are nice supplements.

1. Water

Surprised? Plain water is the best way to hydrate, no second guessing necessary.

Psst: [This stylish bottle makes it easy to drink enough water.](#)

2. Milk

Because it's so much thicker than water, you might think that it could dehydrate, but this is not the case. In addition to calcium and vitamin D, milk contains protein to keep you fueled on even the hottest of days, another thing water can't do. Milk: It's not just for kids.

[Should you be buying organic milk? We found out.](#)

3. Fruit-infused water

If it's hard for you to drink plain water all day, infusing your water with fruit is a healthy way to add flavor without adding sugar. Our favorite combinations? Try adding lime and basil, cucumber with mint, or [any of these other delicious combos](#).

[Infuse your own water with this handy bottle.](#)

4. Fruit juice

Fruit juice contains about 85 percent water, which makes it super hydrating ([make sure you're picking 100 percent fruit juice](#)). The vitamins within natural fruits are also healthy. Be mindful of the sugar content,

though, as juices can be packed with added sugars, which can inhibit hydration. If you're drinking a lot of fruit juice, water it down.

And for a special treat, why not freeze juice pops? Cool and hydrating! Here's [one made with cantaloupe](#) and not much sugar.

5. Watermelon

OK, so this isn't a drink...but every time you eat watermelon, you're retaining 92 percent of the liquid you're eating. That's better than fruit juice! [You can try these other hydrating foods, too.](#)

6. Sports drinks

Advertisements rave about the hydrating power of sports drinks, [like Gatorade](#), which made us suspicious...but they're actually onto something. The electrolytes, a science-y word for salts, in sports drinks can make hydration more effective. (Not to be too gross, but you know how sweat's kinda salty? You want to add that back into your body.)

Sports drinks also taste more flavorful than water, so they're easier to drink quickly for those who force themselves to hydrate or who need quick hydration, like athletes. Again, watch the sugar and carb content, especially if you're not working out. Unless you're running a marathon, one is probably enough.

7. Teas

[Caffeine-free and herbal teas](#) are great, especially if it's just an infusion of leaves in hot water. It doesn't matter whether it's herbal, black, green, or chamomile; hot or cold - tea is just about as hydrating as water. Tea is also packed with antioxidants. While the best option might be to avoid caffeine in general (it's a diuretic, meaning it dehydrates!), drinking even regular tea in moderation will help you get to that daily 8 "glasses."

8. Coconut water

[This trendy beverage](#) boasts 95 percent water content, which is better than fruit juice. It's also typically healthier than juices and sports drinks when it comes to sugar content and added ingredients, but be sure to check the label! (Our [favorite coconut recipes](#) might not hydrate, but they're good.)

9. Milk alternatives like soy, coconut and almond

The studies that found milk to be hydrating didn't test these other "milks," but the Cleveland Clinic recommended the unsweetened ones for kids as a way to keep hydrated in summer. So they're a safe bet for adults, too. [Here's our ranking of dairy-free milks.](#)

Worst Drinks for Hydration

Sneaky fact: Some liquids can actually work against your hydration goals. Make sure you're not reaching for any of these beverages next time you're thirsty—they only dehydrate your body!

1. Soda

Soft drinks often contain caffeine, which is a culprit for dehydration; tons of sugar and sodium; and it's bad for your bones and teeth too. Although just about anything in moderation is fine, grabbing a Diet Coke when you're thirsty might not do much to help. [Here's the truth about diet soda.](#) Swap out soda for sparkling water if you love that carbonation while still giving your body the fluids it needs!

2. Beer

Consuming any kind of liquor removes water from your tissues, meaning you have to drink even more water to offset the effects. As a general rule of thumb, the higher the alcohol content, the more dehydrating your drink is. If you want to avoid dehydration, have a low-alcohol light beer.

[Find out the best craft beer in every state.](#)

3. Wine and hard liquor

Any alcoholic drink over 10 percent alcohol strength is a dehydrator, which means more of the liquid will leave your system than be absorbed. Most wines have around 12 percent, so they're better than hard liquors (37 percent) but worse than beer (4-5 percent). Once again, we advise moderation. [\(How about a mocktail instead?\)](#)

Cocktails with hard liquors, like vodka and rum, can be deceiving, especially if the recipes also include soda or fruit juice. Keep yourself hydrated by always drinking one glass of water for every alcoholic beverage you have—and consider switching to something less potent (like beer or wine)! But every now and then, [we're all over a hand-crafted margarita.](#)

4. Hot cocoa

The bad news? One cup of hot chocolate contains more sugar and calories than a can of soda, dehydrating your system. The good news? You're probably not drinking this in the summer, when it's most important to consciously hydrate. In the winter, people tend to eat more soups and stews, which offer hydration, so having the occasional hot cocoa isn't going to hurt. (Especially when it's [so fluffy and frothy!](#))

5. Coffee

In moderation, coffee isn't too bad, but once you go past that second cup, your body really starts to suffer. Drinking more than 200-300 milligrams of caffeine—the amount in two to three cups of coffee—has been shown to lead to dehydration. To keep yourself safe, switch to decaf if you're a heavy coffee drinker, or limit yourself to a cup or two. Bonus: [You may also stave off a lot of anxiety.](#)

6. Lemonade

Although the sweet-and-sour flavor can be tempting in the heat, lemonade is packed with sugars that don't offer much toward your body's needs ([see for yourself](#)). Swap this out for water infused with lemon slices and you'll feel much healthier!

7. Sweet tea

[This Southern staple](#) screams summer, but when it comes to hydration, it's not so sweet. The amount of added sugar in this drink cancels out any benefits that come with tea's antioxidants, so it's more like a dessert than a drink. That doesn't mean you can't drink it...it just means you have to drink plenty of water with it too!

8. Energy drinks

Packed with caffeine, fake sugars, and complicated chemicals, energy drinks are not the best way to get your hydration fix. [\(Here's why.\)](#) If you're looking to energize while still getting in more liquids, we suggest tea.

9. Flavored milks

White milk on its own is totally fine, but you start to add unnecessary sugars when you throw flavors in there. Avoid chocolate, strawberry, and vanilla milks and stick to good ol' plain until you're fully hydrated.

10. Smoothies

Fruit is healthy to eat on its own, but sometimes you can have too much of a good thing! Smoothies pack more fruit (read: more sugar) into your drinks than you'd think. Add that to the thick consistency and you may have a recipe for dehydration.

That's not to discount the other health benefits of smoothies, though. They're great to refuel after exercise or kick-starting your day with a dose of vitamins. If you want to up the hydration factor, an easy solution is to double the amount of ice in your recipe. This will water down the drink without changing the taste too much. [Try this trick on our amazing smoothie combos.](#)

* <https://www.tasteofhome.com/article/best-and-worst-hydrating-drinks-ranked/>