

# Live Healthy Georgia – Seniors Taking Charge!

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## Proper Hydration

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Water is vital for proper body functioning and serves several purposes in the body such as:

- Regulates body temperature
- Moistens tissues (mouth, eyes, and nose)
- Protects organs and tissues
- Lubricates joints
- Helps prevent constipation
- Carries nutrients and oxygen to cells and helps dissolve minerals and other nutrients
- Carries away wastes from cells

Water accounts for on average 60% of body weight for young adults and about 50% for older adults, which means older individuals can get dehydrated easier because they have less water stores. Typically your muscle mass decreases with age and a loss of body water also occurs. Since your body cannot store water, fluid



must be replaced and kept in balance every day.

The Institute of (IOM)

recommends that adults 50 years and older consume...

- For **Females:** 2.7 liters/day (~11 cups)
- For **Males:** 3.7 liters/day (~15 cups)

Note that this recommendation is for **total water** so it includes water in foods along with beverages. It is estimated that more than 1 in 3 adults do not get the recommended amount of fluids! This is partially due to less efficient kidney function and a reduced thirst sensation in older adults. Insufficient water consumption can lead to several problems such as kidney dysfunction, muscle spasms, and increased risk of bladder cancer. Along with drinking water every day, eating foods with high moisture contents like fruits and vegetables, can be an easy way to increase your fluid consumption.

When you do not drink enough water, your body becomes dehydrated. Some common **signs of dehydration** are:

- Dry mouth
- Flushed skin
- Fatigue and headache



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- Increased body temperature, breathing, and pulse rate
- Dizziness, weakness, and impaired breathing with activity
- Dark colored urine (amber color or apple juice color)

## Tips for staying hydrated and adding fluid to your diet

- Always carry a refillable water bottle with you
- Remember to drink water even when you do not “feel” thirsty
- Always drink a glass of water before and after working outside
- Remember to drink fluids during meals as well as between meals
- If you get tired of water, drink milk, juice, or tea
- Snack on fruits and vegetables throughout the day (fruits and veggies contain high amounts of water)
- Freeze juice or grapes and enjoy as a cold, refreshing snack
- Enjoy smoothies as a dessert or snack

## **\*\*Recipe Corner\*\***

### **Blackberry Iced Tea**

- 3 cups fresh or frozen blackberries
- 1 ¼ cups sugar-substitute (Splenda)
- 1 Tbsp chopped fresh mint
- Pinch of baking soda



- 4 cups boiling water
- 2 family-size tea bags decaffeinated
- 2 ½ cups cold water

Combine blackberries and sugar in a large container and crush berries with a wooden spoon. Add mint and baking soda. Set aside. Pour boiling water over tea bags; cover and let stand 3 mins. Discard tea bags. Pour tea over blackberry mixture and let stand at room temperature for 1 hour. Strain mixture and add cold water. Cover and chill until ready to serve. Yield: 7 ½ cups.

### **Watermelon Aqua Fresca**

- 6 cups seedless, cubed watermelon
- 8 cups water
- ½ cup sugar-substitute
- ½ cup fresh lime juice

Pulse watermelon in a blender until smooth. Pour into a large pitcher and add remaining ingredients. Cover and chill at least 8 hours. Serve in tall glasses. Yield: 13 cups.

