



# Water and Hydration *for your child*

*Evelyn B. Whitmer*

## Getting enough water (fluid) is important to keeping your child healthy:

- ✓ Helps to keep body temperature at the normal level
- ✓ Helps provide enough fluid to sweat to keep you cool
- ✓ Helps to keep bowels moving, prevents constipation
- Children may become dehydrated even if they are not thirsty. Do not wait for your children to say they are thirsty. Children who are playing outside in hot weather must be offered ½ cup to 1 cup every 20 minutes while playing in the heat.
- Children may be dehydrated if urine is deep gold. Urine should be pale yellow in color.
- Generally, tap water is safe for children. If you chose to buy bottled water look for water that has fluoride added. Fluoride helps prevent tooth decay.

## How much fluid does my child need?

The bigger your child is, the more fluid is needed.

A child weighing about...	Should get this much fluid daily...
22 lbs	34 oz (4¼ cups)
44 lbs	51 oz (6⅓ cups)
66 lbs	58 oz (7¼ cups)

## What are the best drinks for children?

- Milk—lowfat 1% or skim for children older than age 2 years. 2-3 cups per day.
- 100% Fruit juice – no more than 4 to 6 oz (½ to ¾ cup) per day.
- Plain water – to provide most of the fluid your child needs. (depending on weight and activity)

## What about sports drinks?

- Sports drinks are mostly sugar and water and little else, so it is usually better to give children plain water without the added sugar.
- The sugar in sports drinks not only adds calories, but may contribute to obesity and tooth decay.

## Food contains water too!

Eating recommended amounts of fruits and vegetables will also help provide fluid the body needs to get enough water. The following fruits and vegetables contain high amounts of water:

- |                        |                        |
|------------------------|------------------------|
| Watermelon – 91% water | Cantaloupe - 89% water |
| Tomatoes – 94% water   | Squash – 93% water     |
| Cabbage – 92% water    | Grapes- 80% water      |

## Sources

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Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Jeffrey C. Silvertooth, Associate Dean & Director, Extension & Economic Development, Division of Agriculture, Life and Veterinary Sciences, and Cooperative Extension, The University of Arizona.

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