

Outdoor health tips from the Posse:

# Water, water, water

There is a tremendous amount of controversy over just how much water a person should drink, and what drinks contribute to that amount. I have heard it all my life, “Hydrate. Drink your water.”

My wife of many years is a firm believer in the “drink your water school.” We have a little routine at our house. She fills up my 30 ounce Yeti mug with water every time she happens by.


I, on the other hand, dump it out whenever she is not looking. She is happy, assuming I am drinking my 900 ounces of water daily. If I drank all the water she wants me to ingest, I would look like the Kool-Aid man, busting through the door to the bathroom every 15 minutes.

Many of my friends are in the medical field, from doctors, surgeons, nurses and therapists. They all preach the same thing, “You are dehydrated, drink more water.” I decided to research this and will share with you some of my findings.

The earth was intensely hot following its formation some 4.6 billion years ago. Very little of the freshwater on earth is likely to have survived that time. Most of our water arrived later through collisions with comets.

Data from a recent Rosetta mission has confirmed that “dirty snowballs” contain water with a mix of isotopes different to water found on earth. Studies of these asteroid-like objects have revealed the presence of water, and are suspected of having delivered it to earth when swarms of them crashed into our planet some 3.8 billion years ago.

The water you drink today is at least 3.8 billion years old. Just think, at one time, some cave-man was being hounded by his



**Mark Rackay**  
Tips from the Posse

cave wife to drink his water, lest he dehydrate. No, you are drinking that same water he once did. It hurts my head to think about where my glass of water has been.

How much water a person must have each day has produced varying recommendations over the years. Your individual water needs depend on many factors, including your health, how physically active you are, and the area where you live.

The principal chemical component in your body is water, comprising about 60 percent of your body weight. Every cell, organ and tissue requires water to function. Water gets rid of waste and toxins through perspiration, urination and bowel movements.

Water is necessary to keep your body temperature normal, which is why you need more water when you have a fever. Being properly hydrated is also important to lubricate your joints.

The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine determined that an adequate amount of fluid intake per day is 15.5 cups for men and 11.5 cups for women. These recommendations cover fluids from water, other beverages and food.

My grandmother always said, “Drink eight glasses of water each day.” That is a half-gallon of water and is probably pretty good advice for the average person. You may need more or less water depending on your personal situation.

For example, if you do an activity that makes you sweat, you are going to have to drink extra water to cover the fluid loss. If you exercise, you should probably hit the water bottle before, during, and after your workout.

Where you live also plays an important role in how much water you require. Hot and humid weather, like we had in Florida,



Scientists believes that the water on earth could be 3.8 billion years old. No wonder I have trouble drinking enough water. (Mark Rackay/ Special to the Montrose Daily Press)

caused you to sweat profusely, even when you were not exercising. Our water intake in the south was very high. The same holds true for those of us that live at high altitudes or in a dry climate. Here you lose water through breathing and work, but the perspiration evaporates quickly so sometimes you do not notice the water loss.

Your body suffers a fluid loss whenever you are sick. Fever, vomiting and diarrhea all cause dehydration and require fluid replacement. Other conditions that might require an increased fluid intake include bladder infections and urinary tract infections and kidney stones.

Experts claim we need about 80 percent of our fluid intake from water we drink. The other 20 percent of needed water can come from the foods we eat. Fruits and vegetables are an excellent source of needed hydration. Spinach

and watermelon, for example, are almost 100 percent water.

Many will disagree, but I believe in the thirst mechanism. When your total water content goes below a certain level, your thirst kicks in. For the majority of people, there probably isn't any need to worry about water intake. The thirst instinct is pretty reliable, as long as you pay attention to it and drink when it kicks in.

If you sweat, through work or exercise, drink more water. Drink a glass of water before each meal, and anytime you feel hungry. Drinking can help curb your appetite.

For most people, if you rarely feel thirsty, and your urine is colorless or a light yellow in color, your fluid intake is probably adequate. A doctor or registered dietician can help you determine what is exactly right for you.

If you are anything like me, it is difficult to drink water just

for the sake of drinking water. It becomes more difficult for me to drink water during the winter months when coffee seems more appealing. Next month, we are going to talk about ways to make that water bottle more appealing and some tips to help you drink your water.

If you will excuse me now, I hear my wife coming this way. She probably wants to refill my water mug so I better dump it out before she gets here.●

Mark Rackay is a columnist for the Montrose Daily Press and avid hunter who travels across North and South America in search of adventure and serves as a director for the Montrose County Sheriff's posse. For information about the Posse call 970-252-4033 (leave a message) or email [info@mcspi.org](mailto:info@mcspi.org)

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