
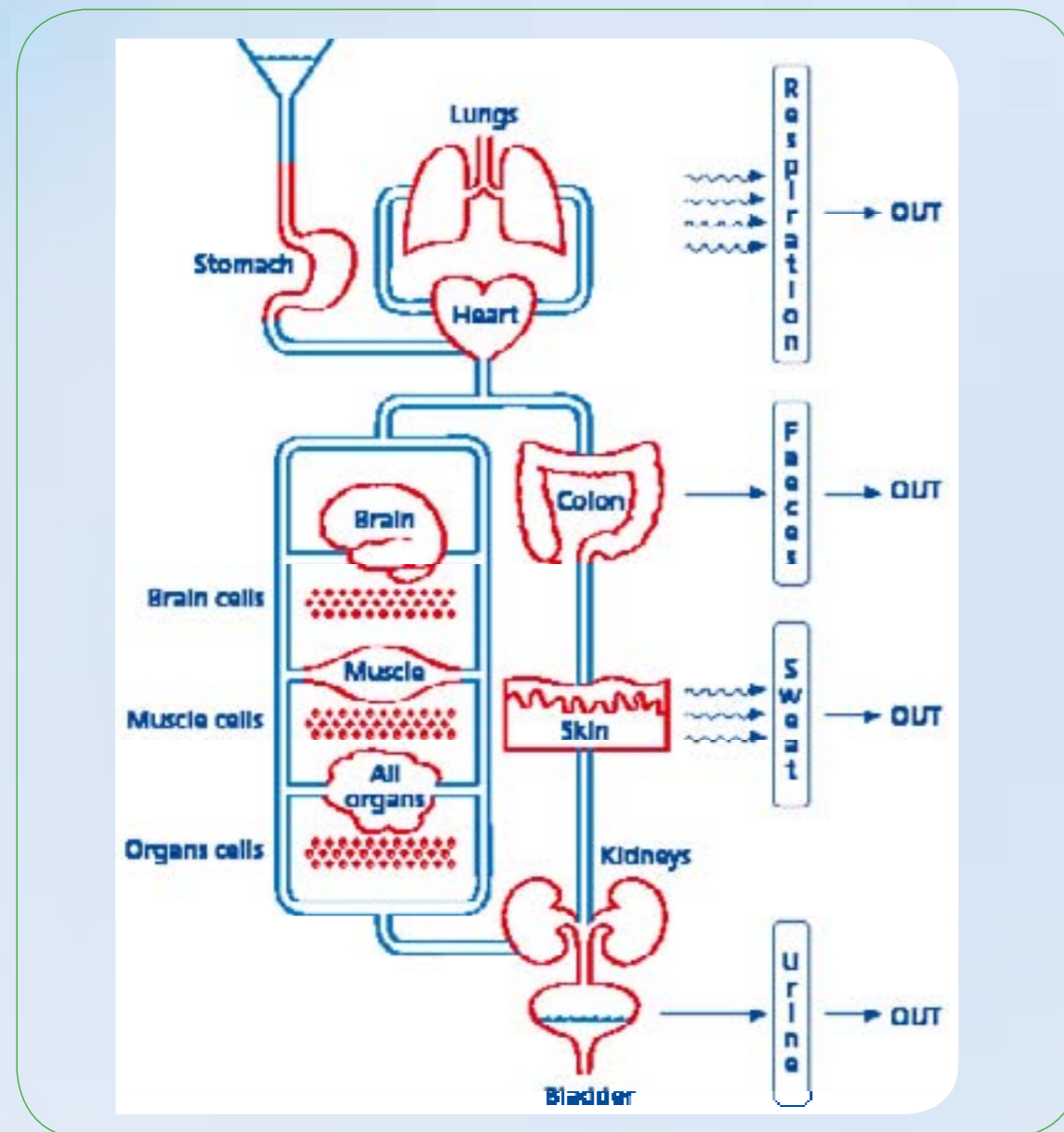




HAD ENOUGH?
TO TURN TEARS INTO SMILES, A DRINK OF
WATER MIGHT BE ALL THAT'S NEEDED ...

 DID YOU KNOW THAT CHILDREN ARE AT GREATER RISK FROM DEHYDRATION THAN ADULTS?!

First the science...your child's a water-powered engine



Water plays a vital role in our lives – our bodies are extremely complex machines that require regular topping up with fluid to keep functioning properly. See here how water travels round the body enabling all the vital functions to do their job. Basically, water is essential to the way cells work and without the right fluid levels, signs of dehydration can start to appear. Like bad temper, headache or fatigue.

Since kids can get dehydrated very quickly it's worth thinking about whether your children are getting enough during the day.

GOOD HYDRATION KEEPS UP ENERGY LEVELS...

- Confusion, irritability and lethargy¹ are some of the undesirable consequences of dehydration. In our schools, dehydration is common² and the effects may look behavioural when they are in fact physical.



... AND BOOSTS MORALE

- When you think about how all the cells in our body need a constant flow of fluids to ensure good health, it's easy to see how in a shortage of water, our bodies behave as though they're in a drought! Some researchers have also shown that hydration has a positive impact on good feelings and morale in a group setting.³

INSTILLING A HABIT OF DRINKING WATER MAY HELP PREVENT OBESITY

Avoid giving your child lots of sugary drinks if possible and make sure they maintain good dental hygiene and a healthy diet. Fruit juices are high in calories and sugar. In large quantities, soft drinks are shown to contribute to weight gain⁴ and store up health issues for the future. Obese children are more at risk from long-term diseases like diabetes, high blood pressure and kidney failure.⁵

The ideal way to gain vitamins from fruit and adequate hydration is to get your child used to eating whole portions of fruit and drinking water or low fat milk.



If you introduce your child to non-sugary tastes from a young age, it's easier to maintain good habits later. You can always try diluting unsweetened fruit juices or adding a squeeze of lemon, lime or orange.

Remember that water is the easiest, purest and most natural way to hydrate without worrying about calorie intake or long-term effects.

HOW MUCH WATER DO INFANTS AND CHILDREN NEED?

Infants have a higher percentage of water in their bodies⁶ and are very vulnerable to dehydration. They lose much more water for their weight compared with adults – 15% of fluid per day compared with 4%.⁷

For example, a 5kg child needs 0.75 litres per day to replace lost fluids compared with 2.9 litres for a 70kg adult male. A 10kg child needs around 1 litre.⁸ One litre is about 4 standard cups of water. A ten-year-old also needs around 1 litre.

When children are playing or exercising, they use up their body's water supplies and it's important they replace the fluids they lose through sweating and being energetic.



HOW DO I KNOW IF MY CHILD IS DEHYDRATED?

There's no quick answer to this because our bodies don't tell us when they're running low on water. By the time your child says they're thirsty they will already be dehydrated and may be exhibiting some unwanted side effects.

Here are some symptoms of dehydration in pre-schoolers:

- Dry coated tongue
- Thirst
- No tears when crying
- Slightly sunken eyes⁹

However, this list doesn't cover all the possible symptoms of dehydration and your child may not experience all of them during an episode of dehydration.

Remember – if you're at all worried about your child, pick up the phone and ring a healthcare professional for advice.



ENSURE YOUR CHILDREN DRINK WATER REGULARLY

Adults have relatively good access to water but children depend on the people who care for them to provide for their basic food and water needs. It can be hard sometimes to know how much your child is drinking particularly if they're at nursery or in full-time education. In fact, research shows that many children have an inadequate fluid intake in school.¹⁰⁻¹² This may also be an effect of an underdeveloped sense of thirst compared with adults.¹

- Make sure your child has a good drink at breakfast time. For younger children it's worth checking with the teachers that they encourage drinking at break times.
- When a child says they are thirsty, act immediately. To encourage healthy drinking habits, it's best to offer water rather than a sweetened drink.

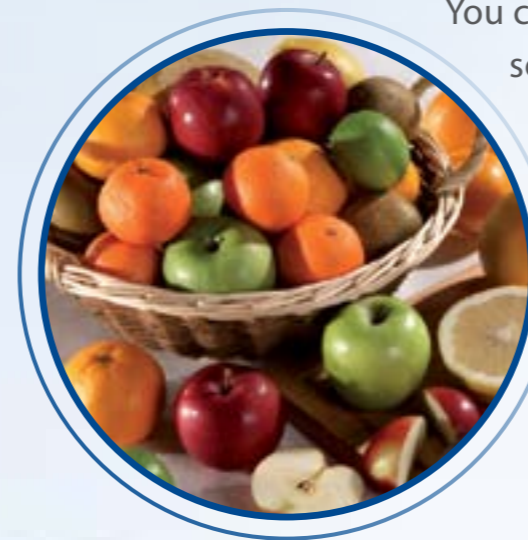
LEAD BY EXAMPLE

Small children use and lose far more water comparatively than adults. So helping them understand their needs is a really valuable thing to do.

Exercise some strong leadership and drink healthily yourself!

You can then give your child a great start in life by passing on some of your own good habits.

Help them develop a taste for unsweetened drinks and foods and you can minimise their risk of weight gain later on.



WELL-HYDRATED CHILDREN HAVE ENERGY AND APPETITE FOR LIFE

Make sure you and your family are getting enough...



Tips for looking after children and teenagers

- ✓ Offer children water regularly.
- ✓ Educate them about how their bodies need water to work and play.
- ✓ For older children, provide a water bottle for them to take to school.
- ✓ Check with the teachers if they encourage drinking during breaks.
- ✓ Watch out for intake of high-sugar drinks.
- ✓ If possible, prevent your child developing a taste for sweetened drinks.
- ✓ If your child wants a flavoured water, try adding a twist of fresh citrus fruit.
- ✓ Encourage schoolchildren to drink water before, during and after exercise.
- ✓ Ensure access to water during extra-curricular activities (e.g. playground and sports activities).



Your doctor and nurse know best!

Ask your healthcare team more about achieving healthy hydration for all your family

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