

Question

I read that you need to drink eight glasses of water every day; do soft drinks also help keep your body hydrated?

Answer

Yes, carbonated soft drinks can help quench your thirst and provide your body with its daily liquid for proper hydration. Hydration is critical in helping to maintain normal body temperature and for every physiological function and action by your body and brain. People can also get liquids from juice, milk, coffee, tea, fruits, vegetables and other foods and beverages. Even beverages with caffeine, like coffee and cola drinks, can help keep you hydrated. Besides basic hydration, carbonated soft drinks can also provide carbohydrate fuel that supplies energy necessary for daily activities. For most people, about 80 percent of total liquids each day come from drinking water and beverages; the other 20 percent of liquids come from food.

An extensive review by the National Academy of Science’s Institute of Medicine determined that all beverages and foods can help keep you hydrated. It found that most people can meet their daily fluid needs through normal drinking behavior—beverages at meals, snacks and in other social situations—and by drinking when they are thirsty. People who are physically active or who live in hot climates may need to consume more fluids.



- Institute of Medicine/National Academy of Sciences. Dietary Reference Intakes for Water, Potassium, Sodium, Chloride and Sulfate. 2004. <http://www.iom.edu/report.asp?id=18495>
- Grandjean AC, et al. The effect of caffeinated, non-caffeinated, caloric and non-caloric beverages on hydration. Journal American College. Nutrition, 19:591-600, 2000.

Institute of Medicine of the National Academy of Sciences Total Daily Water Adequate Intake (AI) Summary

Age Range	Daily Water Adequate Intake	
Infants		
0 to 6 months	3 cups* (0.7 L) assumed to be from human milk	
7 to 12 months	3.5 cups (0.8 L) assumed to be from human milk and complementary foods and beverages This includes ~3 cups (0.6 L) as total fluid, including formula, juices and drinking water.	
Children		
1 to 3 years	5.5 cups (1.3 L) total water** ~4 cups (0.9 L) as total beverages, including drinking water.	
4 to 8 years	7.5 cups (1.7 L) total water ~5 cups (1.2 L) as total beverages, including drinking water.	
Adolescents	Males	Females
9 to 13 years	10.5 cups (2.4 L) total water ~8 cups (1.8 L) as total beverages, including drinking water.	9 cups (2.1 L) total water ~7 cups (1.6 L) as total beverages, including drinking water.
14 to 18 years	14 cups (3.3 L) total water ~11 cups (2.6 L) as total beverages, including drinking water.	10 cups (2.3 L) total water ~8 cups (1.8 L) as total beverages, including drinking water.
Adults	Males	Females
19 to 70+ years	16 cups (3.7 L) total water ~13 cups (3 L) as total beverages, including drinking water.	11.5 cups (2.7 L) total water ~9 cups (2.2 L) as total beverages, including drinking water.

*1 cup equals 8 fluid ounces (~240 mL). Figures rounded up to the nearest 1/2 cup.
** "Total water" included fluids from all food and beverages consumed.

