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## New Requirements for Hydration at School

### Why is it important?

Most people know that humans can only survive a few short days without drinking water. Water makes up more than half of our body weight and is necessary for many important body functions. For instance, your blood, which contains a lot of water, carries oxygen to all the cells of your body. Without oxygen, those cells would die and your body would stop functioning. Water also makes up the fluids that regulate our body temperature, helps us to eliminate waste and cushions our joints and spinal cord.

### How much do you need?

Did you know that the first symptom of dehydration is the sensation of thirst? It's important to drink water throughout the day even when you don't feel thirsty. Many people think that it is only important to drink when it is hot outside but the air can be very dry in Wisconsin winters and your requirements for fluids may be just as high. A research article published in the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition states that most children need between five and eight cups per day.

### What are the best sources?

Water and low-fat or fat free milk are the best way to hydrate the body. Whole fruits and vegetables are another great source of water and can be especially beneficial if you or your children have trouble drinking enough water. Fruit juice should be limited to about four to six fluid ounces per day, especially for children. Many beverages such as soda or energy drinks contain empty calories from sugar and may contain substances, like caffeine, that can be dehydrating. Experts recommend limiting these types of beverages, particularly for children.



### New School Regulations

As many of you may know, a new provision in the Child Nutrition Reauthorization states that potable drinking water is made available during meal time, wherever the meals are served. Children must have free access to water during the meal periods without having to ask for special permission in order to gain access to it. This rule applies to National School Lunch, National School Breakfast and Afterschool Snack programs. CACFP Programs are also encouraged to offer potable water with meals and snacks and allow children access to water throughout the day.



## Additional Resources

- ◆ [www.DietaryGuidelines.gov](http://www.DietaryGuidelines.gov)
- ◆ [www.ChooseMyPlate.gov](http://www.ChooseMyPlate.gov)
- ◆ [www.Health.gov/paguidelines](http://www.Health.gov/paguidelines)
- ◆ [www.HealthFinder.gov](http://www.HealthFinder.gov)