

***Are you drinking plenty?* teachers' guide**

This guide is designed to provide general information on hydration for teachers, and guidance on how to use the hydration poster with pupils.

General hydration information

We all need to drink plenty to stay healthy. Your body is nearly two-thirds water and so it is really important that you consume enough fluid to stay hydrated. If you do not get enough fluid you may feel tired, get headaches and not perform at your best. 'Fluid' includes not only water, but also tea, coffee, milk, fruit juices and soft drinks. Water is also provided by the food you eat – on average 20% of your total fluid intake. It is recommended to drink on average 6-8 glasses of fluid a day. For adults this is around 1.2 litres. Primary aged children would be expected to drink smaller amounts.



Does it matter which drinks you choose?

When you choose your drinks it is important to be aware that although they all provide water and some also contain vitamins and minerals, they may also provide energy (kilojoules). This energy contributes to your daily intake in the same way as that from food. It is also important to look after your teeth, and consuming sugar-containing drinks too frequently between meals can potentially harm your teeth, especially if you don't brush your teeth regularly with fluoride toothpaste. It is also important to be aware that some drinks are acidic (e.g. fruit juice and carbonated drinks) and that this may cause dental erosion (damage to tooth enamel) if they are consumed frequently. For children, the use of a straw lessens the contact with teeth. Water delivers fluid without providing additional energy or potentially damaging teeth.

How can you tell if you are getting enough fluid?

Your body has special mechanisms to make sure you stay hydrated. Feeling thirsty is your body's way of telling you that you need to drink more. However, the easiest way to spot that you might not be getting enough water is if your urine is a dark yellow colour during the day. If you are getting enough water your urine should be a pale straw colour. So, if it is dark or you are urinating infrequently or passing very small amounts of urine, then you probably need to drink some more fluid. You also need to drink more if it is hot, or if your temperature is high due to physical activity or illness.

Can you drink too much?

Yes – drinking excessive amounts of fluid is not helpful and, in rare cases can be dangerous. If you are passing urine frequently and your urine is very pale, you may be drinking more than you need.

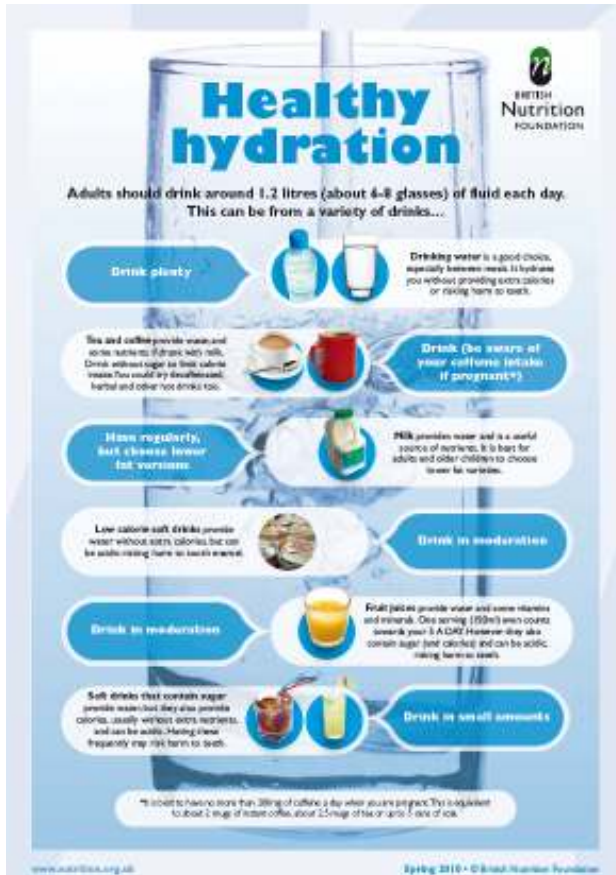
We all need to drink plenty to be well hydrated. Being hydrated means:

- we can concentrate better;
- we feel more awake;

- our bodies work better.

For more information look at the *Healthy hydration guide* at: www.nutrition.org.uk/nutritioninthenews/hydration

You can also download a copy of the *Healthy hydration* poster to learn more about different drinks.



Using the *Are you drinking plenty?* poster chart in the classroom

The *Are you drinking plenty?* poster chart is aimed at primary children aged 8-11 years, but lower secondary age pupils and pupils in special schools may also find it useful.

Question the children about drinking:

- What do you like to drink?
- What did you have to drink yesterday?
- How much should you drink each day?
- Does it matter which drinks you choose?



Explain that they will be keeping a class record of how much everyone drinks each day for up to one week. At the end of the week, the children can add up their total and whole class total, for up to 7 days. You could give the children copies of the *Drink diary* worksheet (at the end of this guide) to help them keep track of what they drink during the day. This might be useful over the weekend.

What to do with your completed drinks chart

When your class has completed the chart, they could use it to answer the *Are you drinking plenty?* questions. On average, a glass of fluid for a child aged 8-11 years is approximately 150ml. Pupils can use this approximation to answer the questions.

There are 10 questions which become progressively more challenging as they advance. The children will need to be able to see the chart to answer the questions. You may need to allow the children to work on the questions one group at a time.

***Are you drinking plenty?* questions**

1. How many glasses did your class drink in one week?
- 2.a Which person or people drank the most on the first day?
2.b How many drinks did they have?
- 3.a Which person or people drank the most during the week?
3.b How many drinks did they have?
4. How many glasses did the class drink on the third day?
5. On which day/s did the class drink the most?
6. If 1 glass is 150ml, how many ml did the class drink in one week?
7. How many litres is this?
8. If an average bath tub can contain 80 litres* of water, approximately how many bath tubs did your class drink in one week?
9. If an Olympic sized pool** contains 2,500,000 litres of water, how long would it take your class to drink this amount?
10. If all the classes in your school drank the same amount as your class, how long would it take your school to drink the equivalent of an Olympic pool?



What to do next

Why not make some delicious juice drinks? Recipes for *Carrot and apple juice* and *Pear, cucumber and ginger juice* are available on the *Food – a fact of life* website www.foodafactoflife.org.uk

*Thames water website

** An Olympic sized pool = Length 50 Metres, width 25 metres, depth 2 metres.



Name: _____

Date: _____

Drink diary

Colour a glass each time you have a drink.

Day	Number of drinks
Monday	
Tuesday	
Wednesday	
Thursday	
Friday	
Saturday	
Sunday	

List the different types of drink you had.