

Winter Hydration Is Important, Too

Adequate fluid intake is essential, even during the winter months. Participation in winter activities such as shoveling snow, skiing or skating can cause perspiration and increase your chances of dehydration. Even if you are inside, circulating heated air evaporates the moisture on your skin, requiring replenishment of any water loss.

How much fluid should you consume during the day? The average adult loses about 2.5 quarts (about 10 cups) of water each day. The Dietary Reference Intakes from the Institute of Medicine advise an Adequate Intake level of 3.7 liters (125 ounces) of total water daily for males ages 19 and over. For females 19 and over, it's 2.7 liters (91 ounces) daily.

Certain factors, such as activity level, may indicate a need for increased fluids. To meet most of your hydration needs, plain water is your best bet. It is readily available, low in sodium and has no calories, fat or cholesterol. Juice and milk can be good options since they supply key nutrients.