

Water

Water is an essential part of the body. It is the main component of cell liquid, blood, lymph and digestive juices.

Elemental composition

Water is made up of the elements hydrogen (H) and oxygen (O) in a 2:1 ratio (H₂O).

Properties

Colourless.

Odourless.

Tasteless.

Boils at 100 degrees Celsius.

Freezes at 0 degrees Celsius.

Neutral Ph 7.

Excellent solvent.

Can be solid, liquid or gas.

Functions of water

Quenches thirst.

Removes waste products from the body through the kidneys as urine.

Makes up 92% of blood plasma, which helps to transport nutrients, oxygen, carbon dioxide, hormones and enzymes around the body.

Provides the minerals calcium and fluoride.

Regulates body temperature at 37 degrees Celsius.

Is involved in the hydrolysis of nutrients during digestion.

Prevents constipation, as it makes stools soft and easy to pass.

Sources

Tap or bottled water.

Fruit and vegetables.

Soups.

Beverages, e.g., milk, tea, coffee and juices.

Recommended daily intake

Consume two to three litres (eight glasses) per day. Fluid requirements increase in certain circumstances including intense physical activity, lactation, diarrhoea and illness, e.g., a fever.