

# Are you drinking enough fluid?

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

- To understand the need to drink plenty of fluids
- To understand the importance of drinking water
- To estimate the quantity of fluid in glasses / cupfuls



## RESOURCES

- Copies of Resources 1 and 2
- Large measuring jugs (at least 1.5 litres), glasses, mugs, soup bowls, drinks cans, etc. (Activity 1)
- Water supply (Activity 1)

## RELATED TOPICS

Alcohol (Theme 4, Topic 1)

### HEALTH SKILLS

Drinking plenty of fluid, particularly water, is important because the body needs water to function well and to get rid of waste products. You lose water when you breathe and sweat. As the temperature rises and you do more activity, the amount of water the body loses increases.

To stay healthy, you need to replace the fluids you lose. This is especially important when the weather is hot or when you are exercising.

This topic will help learners to understand more about the reasons for drinking plenty of fluid and to have a clear idea of the quantities they need to consume daily.

### Related health information

NHS website  
[www.nhs.uk/live-well/eat-well/water-drinks-nutrition/](http://www.nhs.uk/live-well/eat-well/water-drinks-nutrition/)

### FUNCTIONAL SKILLS

Many learners will be aware of the message to drink more water. The recommended quantity is around six to eight glasses per day. It is important that learners have some concept of this quantity, and understand what can be substituted for water without impacting on healthy eating. In order to estimate liquid quantities and also to understand some of the key facts about fluid intake and dehydration, learners need to:

- read for understanding
- estimate and compare liquid measurements.

### Functional Skills/Core Curriculum

Activities in this topic will contribute to learning in the following curriculum areas:

- scan to locate information **English** E3.9 (L<sub>Rt</sub>/E3.7)
- read in detail **English** E3.9 (L<sub>Rt</sub>/E3.8)
- read, estimate, measure and compare capacity using standard and non-standard units **Maths** E3.17 (N<sub>MSS1</sub>/E3.7).

- Invite learners to write down or tell you all the fluids (in terms of glasses, mugs or bowls, rather than quantities) that they have had in the last 24 hours, including soups, alcohol, cups of tea and coffee, juice, canned drinks and water. Include yourself. Add up the total and divide it by the number of people in the group. Give the result as the average for the whole group.
- Discuss with the group if they think this number is OK. Do they know how much an adult should drink every day?

*How many glasses (or mugs) of drink or soup do you think you should drink in a day?*

*Do you drink the same amount in the summer as in the winter?*

### ACTIVITY 1

#### Find out the amount of fluid recommended for adults

- Show learners Resource 1 and point out point 7 of the top tips. Look at the main picture and the questions around it.
- Discuss the recommended quantity. Ask if learners can relate the quantity given to everyday life. Be prepared for learners to want to compare the number in litres to pints. (1 litre = 1.76 pints, 1.5 litres = 2.6 pints. This can be rounded to  $2\frac{1}{2}$  pints.)
- Using a large measuring jug, show learners what 1.5 litres looks like. Point out the markings on the jug and also identify imperial measures on the jug if they are present. Ask learners to guess how many mugs or glasses the jug contains.
- Ask learners to experiment with glasses and mugs (these are usually around 250 ml) of water to find out how many it will take to fill the jug to 1.5 litres. Ideally learners should work in pairs for this activity using a jug and a selection of glasses and mugs. Make sure learners have several tries using different combinations.
- Discuss findings in the group; using a standard glass or mug, 1.5 litres is about six full glasses/mugs.
- Emphasise that this is a recommendation. People vary in their needs and children will be drinking less. People working physically hard will need more.
- If possible bring in a range of other drinking containers such as water bottles, cans, bowls, larger glasses and small glasses. Allow learners to experiment putting together 1.5 litres using different combinations of containers.

*How much is  $1\frac{1}{2}$  litres?  
How many glasses would this be?*

*Are you surprised that you should be drinking this much each day?*

*How does this compare with the group's average intake?*

#### TIP

Remind learners to measure liquids on a flat surface to get accurate readings.

#### Support

- Make sure learners understand that 1.5 litres is the same as  $1\frac{1}{2}$  litres.
- Make sure learners operate in one measuring system only. Metric measures are easier to deal with but some older learners may find them difficult.
- Show learners the marked divisions on the jug and let them mark off the 1.5 litre mark using tape or a pen.
- Make sure learners stand the jug on a flat surface to get accurate readings.

#### ESOL

- Discuss the liquid measurements used in the UK – pints and litres – and contexts where pints are still used.
- Provide models of how liquid measurements are said, e.g.
  - 250 ml – two hundred and fifty millilitres;
  - 1.5 litres – one point five litres.
- Call out measurements for learners to note down. Then go through them again, asking learners to repeat.

## ACTIVITY 2

### Find out more about the reasons to drink plenty of fluid

- Read through the questions on Resource 1. Ask if learners have any other questions to add and write these on the board or on Resource 1.
- If learners have suggested answers to the questions, discuss these with the group.
- Give learners Resource 2 (the drinking fact sheet) and as a group use this to find the answers to the questions.
- Alternatively use the fact sheet as the basis for a quiz.

#### Support

- Some learners will need support to read the information on the sheet. Pairing less confident learners with strong readers can be supportive.
- Make sure learners are familiar with all the words used.

#### ESOL

While reading through the fact sheet, you may need to explain some of the everyday words, for example 'breathing and sweating', 'squash', 'hangover', 'sunken eyes', 'furry tongue', as well as more medical terms like 'dehydration'.

*Why is it important to drink 1.5 litres of water a day?*

*How can you increase your daily intake of fluids?*

### Action

Ask learners to keep a record of the number and types of drinks (including soup) they have over a period of up to a week. They can discuss their findings when the group meets next and consider whether they are drinking enough.

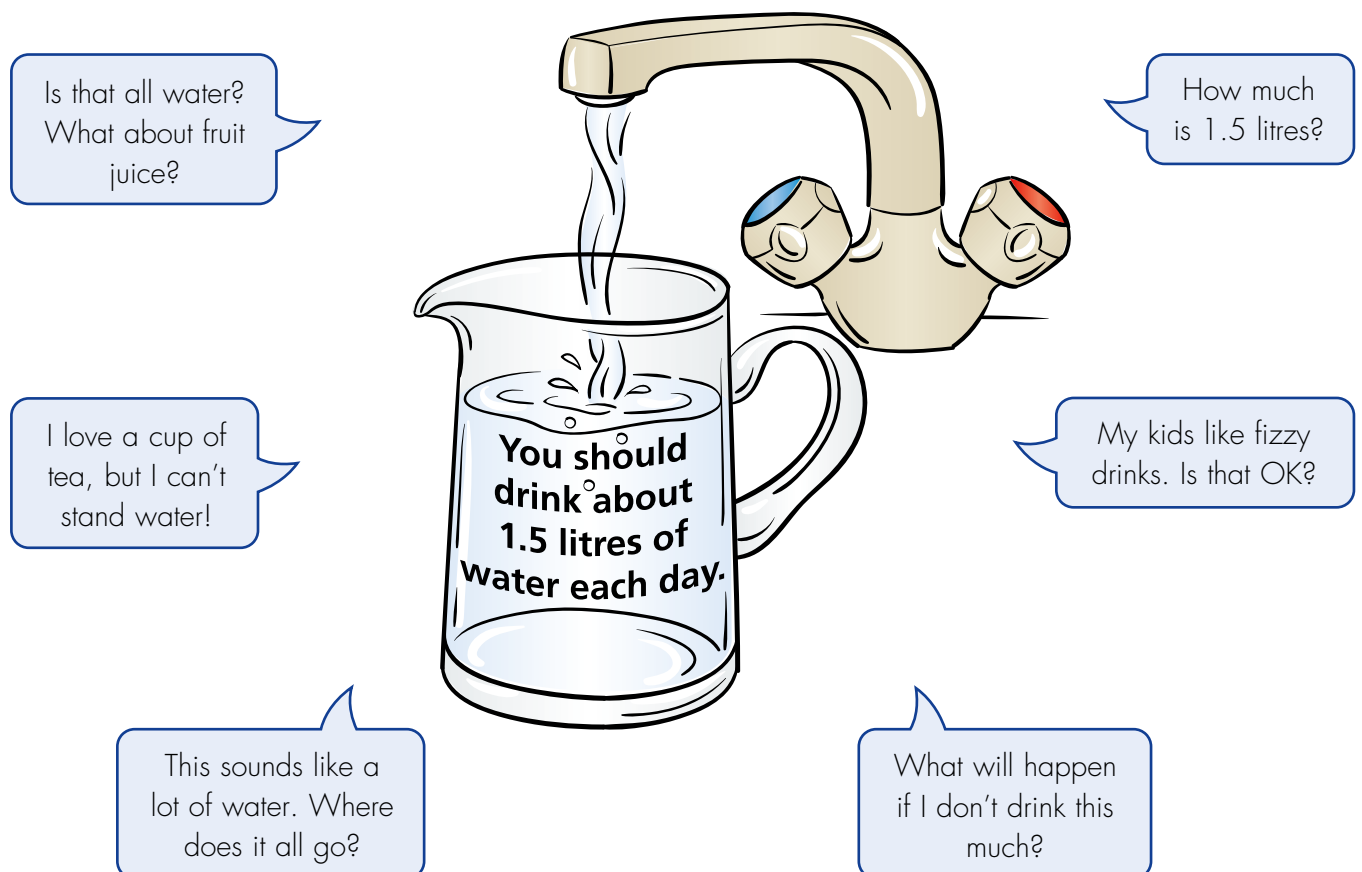
## *Top tips for eating well*

(from NHS website)

- 1 Base your meals on starchy foods.
- 2 Eat lots of fruit and vegetables.
- 3 Eat more fish.
- 4 Cut down on saturated fat and sugar.
- 5 Eat less salt – no more than 6 grams per day.
- 6 Get active and be a healthy weight.

### **7 Don't get thirsty.**

- 8 Don't skip breakfast.



## DRINKING FACT SHEET

- 💧 Water makes up about two-thirds of your body weight.
- 💧 You lose water all the time by breathing and sweating.
- 💧 The body uses water to get rid of waste products in urine.
- 💧 You need water to replace the fluids that you lose.
- 💧 The hotter it is, the more you need to drink.
- 💧 An adult should drink about 1.5 litres (six to eight glasses) of fluid every day.
- 💧 You should drink more water if you have sickness and diarrhoea, to replace the fluids you have lost.
- 💧 The amount of water you need depends on your size, weight, age and level of activity.
- 💧 Other drinks can make up part of your total intake of fluid per day.
- 💧 Drinks with caffeine in such as tea, coffee and cola make you produce more urine.
- 💧 Drinks such as squash and alcohol contain a lot of sugar and should be taken in moderation.
- 💧 Fruit juice is high in calories. Have only one glass per day.
- 💧 When your body doesn't have enough water you become dehydrated.
- 💧 The first sign of dehydration is feeling thirsty.
- 💧 Too much alcohol can cause dehydration. We call this a hangover.
- 💧 Signs of dehydration are:
  - thirst
  - dark-coloured urine
  - not much urine
  - headaches
  - confusion and irritability.
  - lack of concentration
  - sunken eyes
  - dry mouth
  - furry tongue