



How to Actually Hydrate Yourself

Beyond Just Drinking More Water

Why Drinking More Water Isn't Always the Answer

Most people believe that **hydration simply means drinking more water**—but if that were true, we wouldn't see so many people **drinking liters of water daily yet still feeling thirsty, fatigued, or depleted**.

Hydration isn't just about **water intake**—it's about how well your body **absorbs, utilizes, and retains** that water. If your body lacks **minerals, electrolytes, or hydrating foods**, drinking plain water can actually **flush out essential nutrients**, leaving you feeling even more depleted.

In **Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM)**, water isn't just about quantity—it's about **quality, balance, and absorption**. True hydration requires:

- ✓ **Water that can be absorbed**—not just passed through the system
- ✓ **A balance of fluids and electrolytes**—not just stripped, demineralized water
- ✓ **Hydrating foods and broths**—not just liquid intake
- ✓ **Herbal teas that nourish fluids**—not just cold, plain water

Let's break down what **real hydration** looks like and how to make sure your body is **receiving** the water you drink.

The Problem With Just Drinking More Water

1. Water Without Minerals Can Dehydrate You

Most tap and bottled water is **stripped of minerals** like sodium, potassium, and magnesium. When you drink too much **demineralized water**, your body may actually **flush out more minerals**—which can lead to electrolyte imbalances, muscle cramps, and fatigue.

2. Cold Water Can Stagnate Digestion

In TCM, cold water **weakens digestion** and slows circulation. The body has to use extra energy to warm it up, which can make hydration **less effective**.

3. Drinking Water Alone Doesn't Equal Absorption

Your cells **don't absorb water efficiently** unless it's balanced with the right minerals and electrolytes. This is why some people feel like they're **drinking all day but still feel dry, fatigued, or sluggish**.

4. Too Much Plain Water Can Flush Out Nutrients

If you drink excessive water without enough **minerals, salts, or hydrating foods**, it can dilute your **stomach acid and essential electrolytes**, leading to poor digestion and nutrient loss.



How to Hydrate Properly

1. Eat Your Water: Hydrating Foods & Broths

One of the most **effective ways to hydrate** is not just by drinking but by **eating water-rich foods**.

- ✓ **Bone broths & mineral broths** – Provide fluid, electrolytes, and deeply nourishing minerals.
- ✓ **Soups & stews** – Retain hydration and nutrients better than plain water.
- ✓ **Fruits & vegetables** – Cucumbers, melons, oranges, and berries contain structured water that hydrates at a **cellular level**.
- ✓ **Steamed foods over dry foods** – Cooking grains and vegetables with water makes them easier to digest and absorb.

Why this works: Hydrating foods provide **electrolytes and structured water**, which helps water stay **inside the cells** rather than just passing through.

2. Mineralize Your Water

Instead of drinking **stripped water**, add minerals to help your body **absorb and retain hydration** more effectively.

- ✓ **Himalayan salt or sea salt** – A pinch in your water adds trace minerals for electrolyte balance.
- ✓ **Lemon or lime juice** – Helps alkalize and structure water for better absorption.
- ✓ **Coconut water** – Naturally rich in potassium and electrolytes, making it superior to plain water for hydration.
- ✓ **Herbal infusions** – Provide minerals that plain water lacks.

Why this works: Minerals **help water move into the cells** and prevent it from being flushed out too quickly.

3. Use Herbal Teas Instead of Plain Water

Herbal teas **hydrate more effectively than plain water** because they:

- ✓ Contain **minerals and phytonutrients** that improve absorption
- ✓ Support **fluid retention and circulation** in the body
- ✓ Help balance **Yin and fluids** in the system

Best Hydrating Teas:

- ✓ **Chrysanthemum tea** – Cools heat and hydrates dryness
- ✓ **Licorice & jujube tea** – Supports fluid balance and digestion



- ✓ **Goji berry tea** – Nourishes Blood and Yin, keeping tissues hydrated
- ✓ **Hibiscus tea** – Rich in vitamin C and electrolytes, enhances water absorption

Why this works: Unlike plain water, herbal teas **nourish the fluids of the body** and provide minerals that enhance hydration at a **deeper level**.

4. Sip Water Instead of Gulping It

- ✓ **Drink water consistently throughout the day** rather than consuming large amounts at once.
- ✓ **Avoid excessive water intake during meals** to prevent diluting stomach acid.
- ✓ **Drink warm or room-temperature water** instead of cold, which can slow digestion and circulation.

Why this works: Sipping water **allows for steady absorption**, preventing it from flushing out minerals or overwhelming the kidneys.

What About Green Tea? Does It Hydrate or Dehydrate?

Green tea is often **misunderstood when it comes to hydration**. While it contains **water and beneficial compounds**, it also has **mild diuretic properties**, meaning it can increase urination and potentially **reduce fluid retention** if consumed in excess.

The Hydrating Benefits of Green Tea

- ✓ **Contains structured water** – Like herbal teas, green tea provides **bioavailable hydration** that is easier for the body to absorb than plain water.
 - ✓ **Rich in antioxidants (polyphenols & catechins)** – Supports cellular health and fights oxidative stress.
 - ✓ **Aids digestion** – Helps with mild bloating and sluggish metabolism, supporting Spleen and Stomach Qi.
 - ✓ **Improves circulation** – Promotes Blood flow, making it useful for those with stagnation.
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When Green Tea Might Be Dehydrating

- **Contains caffeine** – Although less than coffee, green tea's caffeine can increase urination and deplete minerals if consumed in large amounts.
 - **Can be drying for Yin Deficiency** – If you have **night sweats, dry mouth, or feel overheated**, too much green tea may worsen symptoms.
 - **Can interfere with iron absorption** – The tannins in green tea may **inhibit iron absorption** if consumed with meals.
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Best Ways to Use Green Tea for Hydration

- ✓ **Drink it in moderation** (1 to 2 cups per day) instead of relying on it as a primary source of hydration.
 - ✓ **Balance it with herbal teas** that nourish fluids, like **goji berry, licorice, or chrysanthemum**.
 - ✓ **Drink it between meals** to avoid interfering with mineral absorption.
 - ✓ **Choose lower-caffeine green teas** (like white tea or kukicha) if you're sensitive to stimulation.
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Final Thoughts: Hydration as a Whole-Body Process

True hydration isn't about **chugging gallons of water**—it's about **supporting your body's natural ability to retain and use water effectively**.

- ✓ **Prioritize mineralized water over demineralized water**
- ✓ **Eat hydrating foods, broths, and soups instead of relying only on drinking water**
- ✓ **Drink herbal teas for deeper hydration and nourishment**
- ✓ **Sip water consistently rather than overwhelming your system**

When you start **hydrating the right way**, you'll feel the difference—**more energy, better digestion, improved circulation, and a deeper sense of nourishment**.

Your body doesn't just need water. It needs **hydration**. Now you know how to actually get it.