

Hydration & Recovery Chart

A practical guide for active individuals and health professionals



Why Hydration Matters for Active People

Even mild dehydration, as little as 1 to 2% of body weight, can reduce physical performance, impair concentration, and increase perceived effort during activity.

The Mayo Clinic and CDC both confirm that fluid from food counts toward your total daily hydration needs, making whole foods like watermelon a practical and evidence-based hydration strategy.¹²

Watermelon as a Hydration Source

Nutrient	Per 2-Cup Serving (280g)
Water Content	92% of total weight
Fluid Contribution	~8 to 10 oz per 2-cup serving
Calories	85 calories
Carbohydrates	21g natural sugars
Potassium	314mg per 2-cup serving
Vitamine C	23mg (25% Daily Value)
Lycopene	12.7mg
Sodium	Minimal (trace)

Daily Fluid Needs

Population	Daily Fluid Target	Fluid Form
Adult Women	~11.5 cups	~20%
Adult Men	~15.5 cups	~20%
Active Adults	Increases with sweat loss	~20%

Source: CDC, Mayo Clinic¹²

Source: USDA FoodData Central, FDC ID 2747675³

Hydration Timing Around Activity

Before Activity	During Activity	After Activity	Throughout The Day
2 to 3 hours before • Drink 17 to 20 oz of water • A 2-cup serving of watermelon contributes approximately 8 to 10 oz of fluid • Avoid high-fat, high-fiber foods immediately before activity	Every 15 to 20 minutes • Drink 6 to 12 oz of fluid per 15 to 20 minutes • Frozen watermelon cubes are easy to carry and refreshing mid-effort • Add a pinch of sea salt to support sodium replacement 	Within 45 minutes • Replace 16 to 24 oz of fluid for every pound lost • Watermelon after a workout provides fluid, carbohydrates, and antioxidant compounds • Pair with a pinch of sea salt to support electrolyte replacement	Consistent intake • Monitor urine color (pale yellow = well hydrated) • Keep pre-cut watermelon in the fridge for easy grab-and-go access • Available year-round at most grocery stores

Recovery Nutrition Essentials

Rehydrate	Refuel	Repair
<i>Replace fluid and electrolytes lost through sweat</i> • Watermelon is 92% water by weight	<i>Replenish carbohydrates to restore energy</i> • 21g natural carbohydrates per 2-cup serving of watermelon	<i>Support muscle with protein and antioxidants</i> • Aim for 20 to 40g of protein within 2 hours of activity

- Potassium: 314mg per 2-cup serving
- Add sea salt to support sodium replacement
- Aim for 16 to 24 oz of fluid per pound of body weight lost

- Aim for 1.0 to 1.2g carbohydrates per kg body weight within 30 minutes
- Combine with a protein source for complete recovery

- Watermelon contains lycopene (12.7mg per 2-cup serving³), vitamin C (25% Daily Value per 2-cup serving³), and beta- carotene expressed as Vitamin A (8% Daily Value per 2-cup serving³)
- Research is exploring the role of watermelon antioxidants in exercise recovery⁴

Simple Ways to Use Watermelon for Hydration

- Keep pre-cut watermelon in the fridge for easy grab-and-go snacking
- Blend into a smoothie before morning workouts
- Pack frozen watermelon cubes in your bag or cooler for warm-weather activity
- Pair with a pinch of sea salt post-workout to support fluid and electrolyte replacement
- Use the Watermelon Electrolyte Concentrate recipe for a homemade hydration drink
- Available year-round at most grocery stores

Signs of Dehydration to Watch For

- Dark yellow or amber urine
- Decreased performance or increased perceived exertion
- Headache, fatigue, or difficulty concentrating
- Muscle cramps during or after activity
- Dry mouth or reduced sweat rate

If any of these are present, increase fluid intake and consult a healthcare professional if symptoms persist

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References

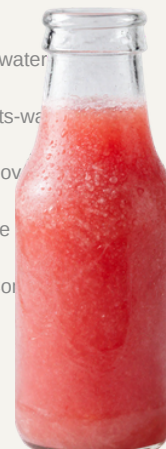
¹ Mayo Clinic. Water: How much should you drink every day? <https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/nutrition-and-healthy-eating/in-depth/water/20044256>

² Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Fast Facts: Water Consumption. <https://www.cdc.gov/nutrition/php/data-research/fast-facts-water-consumption.html>

³ U.S. Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Research Service. FoodData Central. Watermelon, raw (FDC ID: 2747675). <https://fdc.nal.usda.gov/details/2747675/nutrients>

⁴ Norouzzadeh et al. (2025). The effects of watermelon juice on muscle hypertrophy, exercise performance, and muscle soreness in non-athletes undergoing endurance training. Food Science & Nutrition. <https://doi.org/10.1002/fsn3.71070>

Note: This handout is for educational purposes. Individual hydration needs vary based on body size, activity level, climate, and health status. Consult a registered dietitian for personalized guidance.



Watermelon Performance Hub watermelon.org/performance