

Health Hints

Beverages Containing Caffeine Offer Hydration

(NAPSA)—While you may know that it is important to stay hydrated, you may not realize caffeinated beverages, in addition to water, can help. A report from the Institute of Medicine (IOM) says drinks containing caffeine can count toward your daily water intake.

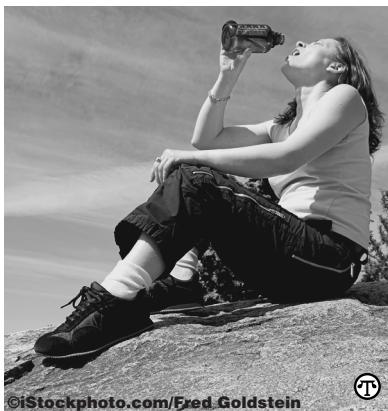
According to Dr. Lawrence Appel of Johns Hopkins University, “While drinking water is a frequent choice for hydration, people also get water from juice, milk, coffee, tea, soda, fruits, vegetables and other food and beverages as well.”

Caffeine and Athletes

A study by Lawrence Armstrong, Ph.D., published in the *International Journal of Sport Nutrition and Exercise Metabolism*, found athletes do not experience a fluid-electrolyte imbalance associated with negative health effects or decreased exercise performance if they consume caffeinated beverages in moderation and eat a typical American diet. In fact, some studies show caffeine can enhance athletic performance while contributing to hydration.

While the IOM recommends 91 ounces of fluid for healthy women and 125 ounces for healthy men per day, it also noted the need for water significantly increases with strenuous or prolonged physical activity and for those living in hot climates. Fortunately for many, a review of studies conducted on “Caffeine Ingestion and Fluid Balance” published in the *Journal of Human Nutrition and Dietetics* said, “...there would appear to be no clear basis for refraining from caffeine-containing drinks in situations where fluid balance might be compromised.”

Although caffeine is considered a mild diuretic, it does not



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Caffeinated beverages consumed in moderation can help combat dehydration in people of all ages and activity levels.

generally contribute to dehydration because the liquid in the beverage itself cancels out any loss of fluid in the body. In fact, a study on “The Effect of Caffeinated, Non-Caffeinated, Caloric and Non-Caloric Beverages on Hydration” in the *Journal of the American College of Nutrition* concluded that there were “no significant differences in the effect of various combinations of beverages on hydration status of healthy adult males.” Therefore, according to this study, “advising people to disregard caffeinated beverages as part of the daily fluid intake is not substantiated.”

How to Tell if

You're Dehydrated

Clearly, if you are thirsty, you should have something to drink. Other signs of dehydration include: dry mouth, swollen tongue, weakness, dizziness, confusion, sluggishness or fainting.

To learn more about caffeine and hydration, visit the International Food Information Council Web site at www.ific.org.