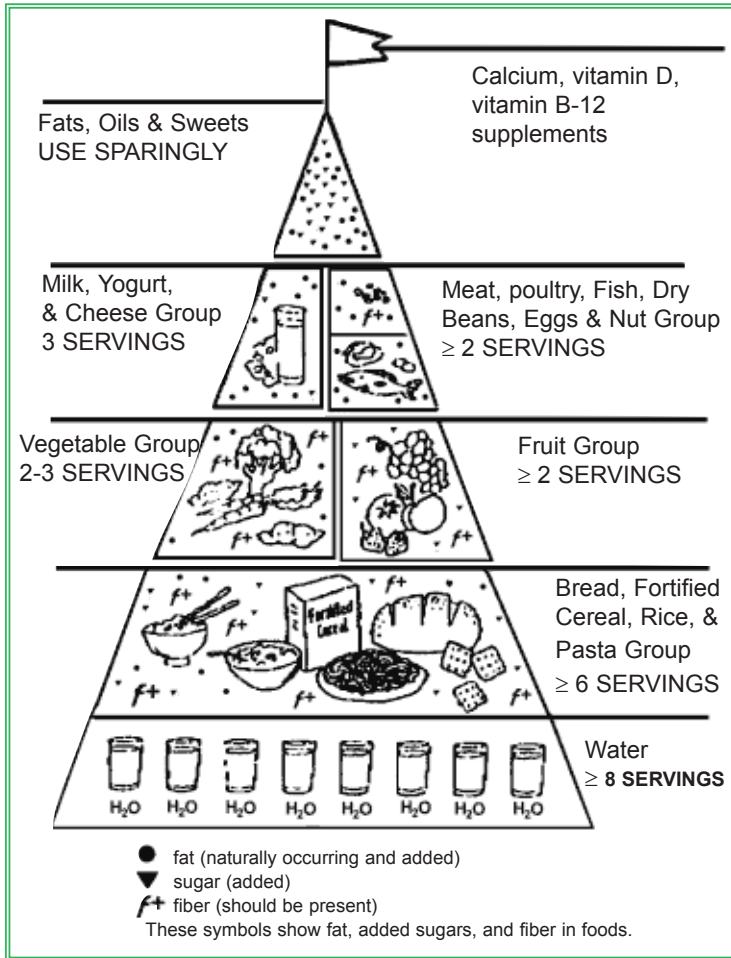


You need about eight cups of fluid each day to replace what your body uses or loses.



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This Pyramid is intended for individuals over 70 who have no major medical conditions. Consult with your doctor before changing your diet.

### Did You Know . . .

- One cup of water equals 8 ounces
- Eight cups of water equals 64 ounces
- An average tea cup holds 6 ounces
- An average mug holds 10 ounces
- What does your average drinking glass hold?

The mission of the Department for the Aging is to foster the independence, security, and dignity of older Virginians by promoting partnerships with families and communities.

The Department's objective is to help Virginians find the information and services they need to lead healthy and independent lives as they grow older.

The Department's Center for Elder Rights is the central point of contact for older Virginians — to help seniors decide what services they need and where to find them.

1-800-552-3402 (Voice/TTY)

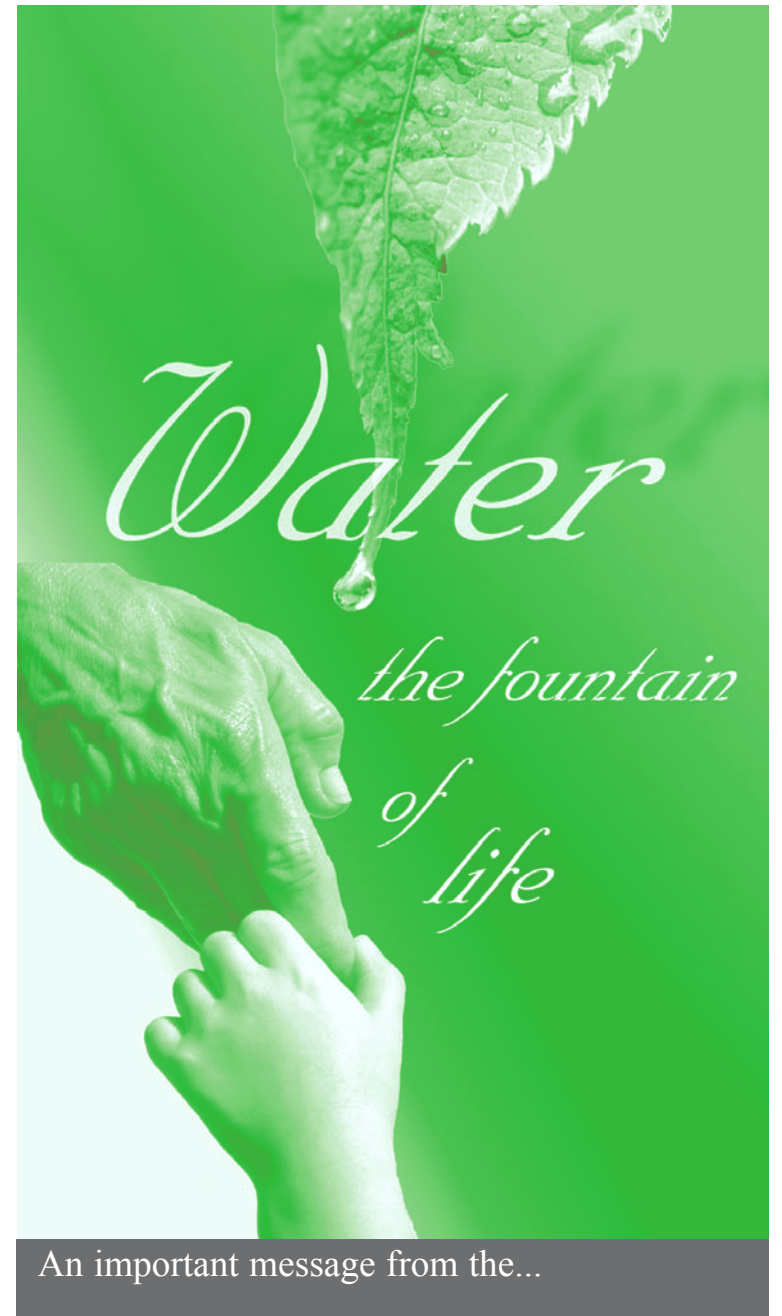
1600 Forest Avenue, Suite 102  
Richmond, Virginia 23229

(804) 662-9333

Toll-free nationwide:  
1-800-552-3402 (Voice/TTY)  
<http://www.aging.state.va.us>



This publication was designed by Emily Chao Miller



An important message from the...

**VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT  
FOR THE AGING**

*If a plant is not watered properly, the effects are obvious. It withers and dies. If we do not "water" ourselves properly, we become dehydrated, and the effects can be serious. Even small shortages of water can have a negative effect on our health and sense of well-being. And yet, we often ignore the vital role water plays in keeping our bodies healthy.*

### WATER'S ROLE

Over half of the body is water. Water plays many roles, including:

- Moves nutrients and medications through the body.
- Reduces constipation.
- Controls temperature: Cools the body in the summer and warms it in the winter.
- Protects joints and organs from shock and injury.
- Keeps skin moist and younger looking.

**Q.** *I don't feel thirsty. Do I still need to drink?*

**A.** Yes. Aging can lessen the sense of thirst. Since you can't depend on feeling thirsty, setting up a reminder

system can help. Try following a regular routine. For example: Always drink water or another fluid with every meal; and take beverage breaks during the day. Schedule a mid-morning juice break. Sip an afternoon cup of tea. Drink a glass of water while watching television. Have warm milk at bedtime.

Put a measured amount of water in a pitcher and place it in a spot that's easy to see. Try to drink the contents by the end of the day.

**Q.** *I use a walker and can't go back and forth to the kitchen all day. Any tips?*

**A.** Keep a water bottle by your chair. Or, keep a thermos of hot water to use for tea or hot chocolate. Many people enjoy plain hot water with lemon.

Juice boxes can be stored anywhere without refrigeration. Or, freeze a beverage in ice cube trays and put the frozen cubes in a pitcher where you can reach it.

**Q.** *If I drink all this fluid won't I have to use the bathroom frequently?*

**A.** You may find that you urinate more often - it's a normal reaction to drinking more. This may be a bother, but the

benefits really are worth the effort. It may be helpful to plan a bit. For example: Instead of drinking a glass of water before you leave to shop, have it when you return home.

If you have a problem with bladder control, talk to your doctor. You may need to avoid certain types of beverages (like those with caffeine), but cutting back on all fluids isn't the answer. Your doctor can tell you what fluids are best.

**Q.** *I just don't like to drink water. Hints?*

**A.** Water is your best choice because it has no calories or other unwanted "extras." But, any non-alcoholic, decaffeinated beverage will count toward your eight-cup goal. Foods that contain a lot of liquid such as soup, gelatin, and watery fruits also help.

Keep a variety of beverages you enjoy on hand. Try juices, milk, hot or iced tea, lemonade, cider, or flavored water.

*Building new habits takes time. Try drinking one extra cup of fluid each day for several weeks, then add another.*