

The art of drinking water: 10 Ayurvedic tips for a happily hydrated body

Ayurveda brings us indispensable guidelines for something we thought had no method: drinking water. Just like the rules for eating there's a way to drink that helps your physical body thrive. It's more than just glass to lips and chug.

With a teensy bit more awareness, the way in which you drink water can seriously be a life-changer. For me, it meant not having to race to pee all the time. For a friend who also heeded the advice it meant no more massive and uncomfortable post-meal burps. For another friend, drinking water the right way meant no longer feeling painfully full after eating a normal amount of food. And this all came with such simple, minor changes.

So, the Ayurvedic way to drink water:

1. First off, sit down to drink (just as you should sit down to eat).
2. Take sips, not full-glass chugs: small sip, swallow, breathe. Repeat.
3. *Sip* water throughout the day. If you chug too much water at once your body doesn't actually absorb all of it. Most of it will run right through you.
4. Drink at least room temperature water. Warm is even better. Cold and iced water literally douse the digestive fire.
5. Only sip a small amount of water with your meals. If you drink too much while you eat, your belly won't have enough room for digestive action. Remember this rule: fill your stomach 50% with food, 25% with water, and leave 25% empty for the digestive juices and process.
6. For the same reason, don't drink loads of water before or after your meals.
7. Drink when you're thirsty. Thirst is a natural urge that should be heeded. It means you're body needs water.
8. As far as how much, we're all different sizes with varied diets and lifestyles. One set rule of eight glasses a day simply can not apply to everyone. Naturally, the miraculous human body has its own built-in measuring system: thirst. If you're thirsty, drink water. When you listen to thirst cues and sip water throughout the day you'll be drinking the right amount.
9. Your urine is a secondary confirmation to know if you're amply hydrated. It should be fairly clear and straw colored. If it's dark yellow you need to drink more.
10. Your lips are yet another indicator. If they're dry you might be dehydrated.

The rules are so straightforward, perhaps even obvious or intuitive. But they might make a serious difference in the way you feel on a daily basis.

Whether it's how to eat, how to drink, how to bathe, or the myriad of other natural behaviors that we've never given a second thought, the beautiful science of Ayurveda teaches us the ideal way to do each to feel our absolute best.

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