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tea health facts

answers about tea and hydration

Fluid is vital to life, and while humans can survive weeks without food, they can only survive a few days without fluid. It is vital for a number of life functions including:

- Transportation and excretion of waste products
- Lubrication of joints and eyes
- Regulation of body temperature

Approximately 50-70% of our body weight is made up of water, which varies depending on

age and gender (females have less water due to a higher composition of body fat). This water is distributed amongst the extracellular (blood and other fluids) and intracellular (within the cells) compartments of the body.

Fluid balance is based on the amount of water that is lost in output (through excretion, the skin and the lungs) against the intake of water (from food, drinks and the metabolism).

tea and fluid replacement

Tea is an important source of fluid and can count towards your daily intake of 6-8 cups of fluid. A cup of tea is 99.5% water without the addition of milk. It is a common misconception that tea should be avoided as a fluid replacement due

to the diuretic action of the caffeine present. Research has shown that for caffeine to have a diuretic effect a person has to consume the equivalent of 5-6 cups of tea in one sitting.

fluid depletion

The body's fluid balance generally results in variations of less than 1%. Variations of 1-2% can result in dehydration and have negative consequences effecting body temperature

and causing thirst. At 3% loss symptoms could include a dry mouth, vague discomfort and loss of appetite.

fluid requirements

Individual fluid requirements vary considerably as the amount of fluid lost will depend on various factors such as the environmental temperature, humidity, individual metabolism, activity levels, general state of your health and diet. It was established by the World Health Organisation

that the average male needs 2.5 litres of fluid per day and a female 2.2 litres. In practical terms this means drinking around 6-8 glasses of water per day. More water should be drunk in hot weather, if you are physically active or during illness.

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remember: great tea takes three

While the fact that antioxidants are in tea is widely recognised, the actual method of maximising their health benefits is the length of time your tea is brewed.

The best way to ensure this is to brew (let your teabag sit in boiling water) for a minimum of three minutes. This is the **Great Tea Takes Three** rule.



So, what does the three minutes do for your tea?

- 1 The first minute is for colour - watch as the freshly boiled water starts to reveal the colour of your tea
- 2 The second minute is for flavour - the colour of your tea deepens and the taste develops
- 3 The third minute is for health - your tea will develop all the health benefits from the great antioxidants found in all tea

The third minute lets loose all those great antioxidants that will help you fight the free radicals running wild around your body. It's the easiest and tastiest way to get antioxidants into your system.

how to maximise the antioxidants in tea

It is also interesting to note that antioxidant levels in tea are greatly reduced in the decaffeination process.

So although de-caffeinated blends of tea have less caffeine they also have less of the valuable antioxidants.

¹ **Tea and Antioxidant Properties:** <http://www.tea.co.uk/healthresources.php>

² **Flavonoid Info:** <http://flavo.vit.fi/roleofflavonoids.htm#antioxidants>