

# Fitness from the Fairways.....



## ”Are you drinking enough water?”

Are you drinking enough water? We all remember the old standard of eight glasses of water per day – but is that really enough? Can you drink too much water? What happens to my golf performance if I don’t get enough water?

Recent studies have caused confusion to the water question, so I scoured the publications, called the experts and have come up with the following guidelines regarding water consumption for health and for golf performance. As always, if you have any medical conditions or specific questions about this or any other health topic, check with your doctor or nutritionist.

### **The Importance of Water**

Water is the fundamental keystone - making up over 75% of your body, yet the general public - let alone golfers - does not understand the importance of a well-hydrated body nor how much water is lost during the course of daily living. Water is so important that it is impossible to sustain life for more than a few days without it.

Every system in your body depends on water. For example, water regulates your body’s temperature via sweat, transports nutrients to and removes waste from your cells and provides a cushion – protecting your organs from every-day life.

### **Dehydration**

“In a dehydrated state the body is unable to cool itself, leading to heat exhaustion and possibly heat stroke. Without an adequate supply of water the body will lack energy and muscles may develop cramps” says Dr. Cedric Bryant – Chief Exercise Physiologist of the American Council on Exercise.

“For regular exercisers maintaining a constant supply of water in the body is essential to performance. Dehydration leads to muscle fatigue and loss of coordination. Even small amounts of water loss may hinder golf performance. To prevent dehydration, golfers must drink before, during and after the round” Bryant says.

### **How much is enough?**

There is a simple formula you can use to determine the right amount of water you will need each day. The formula is:

Your body weight ÷ 2 = Optimal Water Intake

The optimal amount of water to drink is ½ your body weight (pounds) in ounces per day. For example, a 200 lb. person will need to drink 100 ounces of water per day. A key point to remember is that about 20-25% of your optimal water intake will be through the foods you eat and the other liquids that you drink. Both caffeine and alcohol can have a diuretic effect, so be sure to compensate for this additional water loss.



## How Much Is Too Much?

"Water intoxication is very rare, although it has been seen in fraternity pranks. That can be very serious and result in death" says David Perlow, MD, an Atlanta-based urologist. If you follow your thirst, you won't go wrong, Perlow says. He notes that pre-modern man never ran around sipping on a water bottle. A dry mouth indicated it was time to run to the stream for a drink. Perlow says the bladder is like a balloon. When you make infrequent trips to the bathroom, it can become overstretched -- which can result in problems with incomplete emptying, he explains. He recommends 7-12 trips to the toilet daily for most healthy people.

## Hydration hints

- **Drink before you are thirsty.** Thirst is a signal that your body is already on the way to dehydration. Drink more than thirst demands and continue to drink throughout the day.
- **Check the color of your urine.** If your urine looks like the color of apple juice, you are probably dehydrated. If it looks more like the color of lemonade or no color at all, you are probably well hydrated.
- **Slowly increase your water intake.** If you're trying to drink more, consider upping your water intake gradually – 10 ounces at a time - to allow your body to adjust. Otherwise you may feel bloated and will be running to the bathroom every 15 minutes.
- **Plan for your day.** Use a container or water bottle that is large enough for your daily water need. Fill it up in the morning and drink all the water before bedtime.
- **Morning drinking.** Drinking water first thing in the morning is the first step to optimal hydration. Start with 25% of your total water intake in the morning. The remaining water should be consumed throughout the day.

## About Ted Vickey – The Fitness Caddy

One of the nation's top fitness management consultants, Ted is the former Executive Director of the White House Athletic Center under the Bush, Clinton and Bush administrations. He is President of FitWell LLC, a fitness consulting company to Corporate America and the golf industry. He is the Fitness Contributor on Tee Time Radio ([www.teetimeradio.com](http://www.teetimeradio.com)) heard around the world, a Board of Director for the American Council on Exercise – America's Exercise Watchdog, and founder of [myfitnesscaddy.com](http://myfitnesscaddy.com) serving the fitness needs of golfers worldwide. Ted received his degree in Exercise and Sport Science from Penn State and has been an ACE Personal Trainer since 1992. Over his career, Ted has helped countless numbers of people achieve their goal of better health through better fitness.