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## Fuel your body with some H<sub>2</sub>O

One way to think about the human body is to consider it a machine. For now, let's imagine it's a car. Food is the fuel that powers the motor so we can perform any activity. And, if food is the fuel, then water would be the oil. H<sub>2</sub>O is the lubricant that makes the whole remarkable human machine run smoothly.

Fluid or water comprise 70 percent of our total body weight — or it should. Unfortunately, most of us are chronically dehydrated and don't even know it. We get out of bed in the morning and drink coffee or packaged beverages all day. These contain caffeine, so they act as diuretics and make us "pee."

Then, when we go home at night some have a couple of beers or a glass of wine with dinner — and these contain a different diuretic — alcohol. Because we rarely drink

natural, clear fluids without additives, we are working inefficiently and without lubrication — essentially running the body dry.

Here are the facts. The average person needs to consume about 64 ounces of water a day just to replace the amount of fluid that is lost as part of everyday bodily functions and activities. That's a 2 liter pop bottle.

### HEALTHY BOTTOM LINE



Mick Bates

So try this. At the beginning of the day, fill a 2-liter bottle with water and see if you can drink it by the end of the day. Better still, have one at work and one at home as a reminder. (Keep a couple of these empty bottles handy; so you can quickly fill one.) If you are exercising or working hard enough to sweat, you need about twice this amount — which is about a gallon a day.

So, how do you know if you're getting enough water? You should be using the restroom at regular intervals throughout the day and your "pee" should be clear or light colored. If your urine is consistently dark or brightly colored — or, you are going to the bathroom only a couple of times a day, these might be signs that you are dehydrated. Try increasing your fluids and if this doesn't change or improve, you should check with your health care provider. If you want to track your water intake, keep a log or download the Daily Snapshot from our Web site,

Bodyworkshfr.com.

One of the most effective, simplest and inexpensive ways to improve your health — to actually decrease total body weight and promote healthy weight loss — is to make sure that you get the recommended level of fluid intake every day.

Water is calorie-free; it takes up space in the gut and uses the same brain pathways that control hunger and control thirst. We actually get thirsty prior to getting hungry and often mistake one for the other. Bottom line? It's a no brainer. What do YOU have to lose?

— Bates owns and operates BODYWORKS in Beckley. Columns from previous months can be viewed at [Bodyworkshfr.com](http://Bodyworkshfr.com) under the Articles tab, then the News drop down or at [Register-Herald.com](http://Register-Herald.com), search Healthy Bottom Line.



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