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Fluids

Activity kit

Funded by the Australian Government Department of Health. Visit the [Department of Health website](http://www.health.gov.au) (www.health.gov.au) for more information.

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About the kit

This activity kit can be used to talk about the importance of hydration with your clients.

Older people need **at least 8** glasses of fluid each day. This activity is designed to help older people identify different foods and drinks that count as fluid and can help them to stay hydrated.

This kit contains

- 1 title page
- 1 introduction page
- 8 fluid picture pages
- 1 points to consider page
- 1 answer page

Set up

- Print pages 3 - 9 of this activity kit (colour is best).
- If possible, laminate the pages so they can be reused.
- Place pages 3-8 side by side on a flat surface.
- Keep page 9 hidden, to check answers at the end.

How to play

- Discuss drink choices with your clients and the importance of hydration for health.
- Ask your clients to pick which of these items they think count as a fluid.
- Go through the results and encourage clients to discuss any items they were surprised by.

Answers

Once your clients have decided which items count as a fluid, check the answer pages. Discuss the results with your clients, and explore any discussion points that occurred during the activity.

Water



?

Does this count as a fluid?

Milk on cereal



?

Does this count as a fluid?

Jelly



?

Does this count as a fluid?

Soup



?

Does this count as a fluid?

Custard



?

Does this count as a fluid?

Tea



?

Does this count as a fluid?

Coffee



?

Does this count as a fluid?

Beer



?

Does this count as a fluid?

Points to consider

- Staying hydrated is important for everyone, especially for older people.
- Being dehydrated can make it harder to keep your balance, harder to think clearly, and increases your risk of constipation and urinary tract infections.
- Older people are at higher risk of dehydration.
- Some older people may have trouble getting a drink themselves or holding onto a cup.
- As we age our thirst sensation decreases. Older people may not feel thirsty but could be dehydrated. If they don't feel thirsty they may not remember to drink.
- Some medications can also make you lose fluid by causing you to pass urine more often. It is important to drink plenty of fluids. Talk to your doctor if you are concerned about your medications or toileting habits.
- On warm days you may need to drink more than usual to make sure you stay hydrated, even if you don't feel thirsty.

Answers for the fluid activity

Water: Yes. Water is a great thirst quencher.

Milk (on its own or on cereal): Yes. Milk is high in calcium and protein, which helps keep bones and muscles strong.

Jelly: Yes. If you have diabetes, a sugar-free or low-joule jelly may be a better choice.

Soup: Yes. Soup is a good way to get fluid from a meal, as well as vegetables and/or meat in it.

Custard: Yes. Custard is a good option if you have trouble chewing or swallowing food.

Tea: Yes. Caffeine may have a mild diuretic effect in large doses but tea and coffee count towards fluid intake.

Coffee: Yes. Making a milk coffee is also a great way to get extra protein and calcium.

Beer: No. Alcoholic drinks are diuretics and do not count towards your fluid intake for the day. Choose alcoholic drinks like beer, wine and spirits in moderation.