## 1200 Calorie Meal Plan Example

## BREAKFAST:

1 XOCAI HIGH-ANTIOXIDANT / PROTEIN SHAKE + 1 FRUIT
Example:

- 2 scoops shake mix +8 fl. oz. water + one half banana
OR:


## 1 PROTEIN UNIT+ 1 ORAC FRUIT <br> Examples:

- 7 egg whites (hard boiled or cooked with pan spray as an omelet) +1 cup strawberries
OR:
- 1 cup nonfat cottage cheese $+3 / 4$ cup blueberries

LUNCH: 2 PROTEIN UNITS + 2 VEG + SALAD + 1 GRAIN + 1 ORAC FRUIT
Example:

- 8 ounces broiled fish with teriyaki sauce
- AND 1 cup steamed spinach + 1 cup steamed carrots
- AND mixed green salad
- AND $1 / 2$ cup brown rice
- AND 1 small or $3 / 4$ medium Red Delicious apple


## DINNER:

1 XOCAI HIGH-ANTIOXIDANT / PROTEIN SHAKE + 1 FRUIT

## Example:

- 2 scoops Shake Mix + 8 fl. oz. water + 1 cup strawberries
OR
1 PROTEIN UNIT + 2 VEGETABLES + SALAD + 1 ORAC FRUIT


## Example:

- 3 ounces roasted chicken breast
- AND 2 cups steamed broccoli
- AND 4 cups of salad greens with seasoned vinegar
- AND 1 cup blackberries

SNACKS: Snack during the day on Xocai Healthy Chocolate Products (150-200 calories total) or other high ORAC foods to keep blood sugar levels steady and increase antioxidant intake.

## 1500 Calorie Meal Plan Example

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BREAKFAST: 1 XOCAI HIGH-ANTIOXIDANT / PROTEIN SHAKE + 1 FRUIT
    Example:
    - 2 scoops shake mix + 8 fl. oz. water +
    one half banana
    OR:
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## 1 PROTEIN UNIT + 1 ORAC FRUIT

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Examples:
- 7 egg whites (hard boiled or cooked with pan spray as an omelet) +1 cup strawberries
OR:
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- 1 cup nonfat cottage cheese $+3 / 4$ cup blueberries
A.M. SNACK:

1 PROTEIN SNACK
Example: $1 ⁄ 2$ Xocai Protein Bar
LUNCH:
P.M. SNACK: 1 PROTEIN + 1 FRUIT

Example: 1 stick low-fat mozzarella string cheese +20 cherries
DINNER:
1 XOCAI HIGH-ANTIOXIDANT / PROTEIN SHAKE + 1 ORAC FRUIT Example:

- 2 scoops Shake Mix + 8 fl. oz. water +1 cup strawberries OR:

2 PROTEIN UNITS + 1 VEG + SALAD + 1 GRAIN + 1 ORAC FRUIT
Example:

- 6 to 8 ounces roasted chicken or turkey breast, fish, tuna or shellfish
- AND 1 cups steamed green beans
- AND 4 cups of salad greens with light dressing
- AND $1 / 2$ cup brown rice
- AND one rounded cup blackberries

MORE SNACKS: Snack during the day on Xocai Healthy Chocolate Products (150 200 calories total) or other high ORAC foods to keep blood sugar levels steady and increase antioxidant intake.

## Antioxidant - Protein Powered Shake Recipes: with Xocai High-Antioxidant Protein Meal Replacement

| The XO-CASE |  |
| :--- | :--- |
| 1 Cup | Water |
| $1 / 2 ~ C u p ~ o r ~$ <br> 2 Scoops | X ProteinM eal Shake |
| 3 | Frozen Strawberries |
| $1 / 2$ Cup | Greek Yogurt |
| 1 Teaspoon | Cinnamon |
| $1 / 4$ Teaspoon | Chotmeg |
| $1 / 4$ Cup |  |
| Approximately 275 Calories |  |


| The X Factor |  |
| :--- | :--- |
| 1 Cup | Water |
| $1 / 2$ Cup or <br> 2 Scoops | X ProteinMeal Shake |
| 3 | Frozen Strawberries |
| 2 Chunks | Frozen Pineapple |
| $1 / 2$ | Frozen Banana |
| $1 / 4$ Cup | Chopped lce |
| Approximately 300 Calories |  |


| The XO-JOY |  |
| :--- | :--- |
| $\mathbf{1}$ Cup | Almond Milk |
| $1 / 2$ <br> 2 Scup or <br> $\mathbf{2 ~ S c o o p s}$ | X ProteinM eal Shake |
| $\mathbf{1}$ Ounce | Coconut Milk |
| $\mathbf{1 / 2}$ Cup | Chopped Ice |
| Approximately 300 calories. <br> Optional: Use Shredded Coconut instead <br> of coconut milk |  |


| The XO and Tell |  |
| :--- | :--- |
| 1 Cup | Water |
| $\mathbf{1 / 2}$ Cup or |  |
| $\mathbf{2}$ Scoops |  |$\quad$ X ProteinMeal Shake | $\mathbf{1 / 4}$ Cup | Frozen Blueberries |
| :--- | :--- |
| $\mathbf{1 / 2}$ | Frozen Banana |
| $\mathbf{1}$ Cup | Chopped Ice |
| Approximately 260 Calories |  |


| The XO - Mint |  |
| :--- | :--- |
| $\mathbf{1}$ Cup | Water |
| $\mathbf{1 / 2}$ Cup or <br> $\mathbf{2}$ Scoops | X ProteinMeal Shake |
| $\mathbf{1}$ Ounce | Xocai Activ |
| $\mathbf{2}$ Fresh | Mint Leaves |
| $\mathbf{1}$ Cup | Chopped Ice |
| Approximately 220 Calories |  |


| The X-Monkey |  |
| :--- | :--- |
| $\mathbf{1}$ Cup | Almond Milk |
| $\mathbf{1 / 2}$ Cup or <br> $\mathbf{2}$ Scoops | X Protein Meal Shake |
| $\mathbf{1}$ tablespoon | Chunky Peanut Butter |
| $\mathbf{1 / 2}$ | Frozen Banana |
| $\mathbf{1}$ Cup | Chopped Ice |
| Approximately 375 Calories <br> Option: May replace water for almond milk <br> to cut calories |  |

## The XO - Time

| 1 Cup | Water |
| :--- | :--- |
| $1 / 2$ Cup or <br> 2 Scoops | X Protein Meal Shake |
| 1 Cup | Greek Yogurt |
| 1 Teaspoon | Honey |
| Approximately 280 Calories |  |

## The X Mocha Frap

| 1 Cup | Cold Coffee (Black) |
| :--- | :--- |
| $1 / 2$ Cup or <br> 2 Scoops | X ProteinMeal Shake |
| 1 Cup | Chopped Ice |
| Approximately 200 Calories |  |


| The X Mocha |  |
| :--- | :--- |
| Raspberry Frap |  |
| 1 Cup | Cold Coffee (Black) |
| 1/2 Cup or <br> 2 Scoops | X Protein Meal Shake |
| $\mathbf{4}$ | Raspberries |
| $\mathbf{1}$ Cup | Chopped Ice |
| Approximately 200 Calories |  |


| The X Vanilla |  |
| :--- | :--- |
| Mocha Frap |  |


| Chocolate Orange <br> Cream-Sicle |  |
| :--- | :--- |
| 6 Ounces | Water |
| $\mathbf{1 / 2}$ Cup or <br> $\mathbf{2}$ Scoops | X Protein Meal Shake |
| $\mathbf{2}$ Ounces | Almond Milk |
| $\mathbf{1}$ | Banana |
| $\mathbf{2}$ drops | Orange Essential Oil |
| $\mathbf{1}$ Cup | Chopped Ice |
| Approximately 300 | Calories |


| ProvOcado |  |
| :--- | :--- |
| $1 / 2$ Cup | Almond Milk |
| $1 / 2$ Cup | Water |
| $1 / 2$ Cup or <br> $\mathbf{2}$ Scoops | X Protein Meal Shake |
| $\mathbf{2}$ | Xocai X Power <br> Squares |
| $\mathbf{1 / 2}$ | Avocado |
| $\mathbf{3 / 4}$ Cup | Chopped Ice |
| Approximately 385 Calories <br> Optional: Add 1 packet Splenda |  |


| Xe Protein |  |
| :--- | :--- |
| 8.4 Ounces | Xocai Xe Energy Drink |
| 1/2 Cup or <br> 2 Scoops | X Protein Meal Shake |
| 1 Cup | Chopped Ice |
| Approximately 335 Calories |  |

## Food Lists for Meal Planning Protein Foods

| FOOD ITEM | ONE UNIT | CALORIES | PROTEIN(Grams) |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Egg whites | 7 whites | 115 | 25 |
| Cottage cheese, nonfat | 1 cup | 140 | 28 |
| Xocai High-Antioxidant X Protein Meal Replacement Shake | 2 scoops + 8 oz water | 190 | 21 |
| Beef, lean | 3 ounces, cooked weight | 145-160 | 25 |
| Chicken Breast | 3 ounces, cooked weight | 140 | 25 |
| Turkey Breast | 3 ounces, cooked weight | 135 | 25 |
| Turkey Ham | 4 ounces, cooked weight | 135 | 18 |
| Ocean-caught Fish | 4 ounces, cooked weight | 130-170 | 25-31 |
| Shrimp, Crab, Lobster | 4 ounces, cooked weight | 120 | 22-24 |
| Tuna | 4 ounces, water packed | 145 | 27 |
| Scallops | 4 ounces, cooked weight | 135 | 25 |
| Vegetarian |  |  |  |
| Soy Canadian Bacon | 4 slices | 80 | 21 (varies) |
| Soy Hot Dog | 2 links | 110 | 22 (varies) |
| Soy Ground Round | 3/4 cup | 120 | 24 |
| Soy Burger | 2 patties | 160 | 26 |
| Tofu, Firm | 1/2 cup | 180 | 20 (varies) |

## Fruits

| FOOD ITEM | ONE UNIT | CALORIES | FIBER (Grams) |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Apple | 1 medium | 75 | 3 |
| Apricots | 3 whole | 50 | 3 |
| Avocado | $1 / 4$ average fruit | 80 | 2 |
| Banana | 1 small | 100 | 3 |
| Blackberries | 1 cup | 75 | 8 |
| Blueberries | 1 cup | 110 | 5 |
| Cantaloupe | 1 cup cubed | 55 | 1 |
| Cherries | 20 | 80 | 2 |
| Grapes | 1 cup | 115 | 2 |
| Grapefruit | $1 / 2$ fruit | 40 | 2 |
| Honeydew melon | 1 cup cubed | 60 | 1 |
| Kiwi | 1 large | 55 | 3 |
| Mango | 1/2 large | 80 | 3 |
| Nectarine | 1 large | 70 | 2 |
| Orange | 1 large | 85 | 4 |
| Papaya | 1/2 large | 75 | 3 |
| Peach | 1 large | 70 | 3 |
| Pear | 1 medium | 100 | 4 |
| Pineapple | 1 cup diced | 75 | 2 |
| Plumbs | 2 small | 70 | 2 |
| Strawberries | 1 cup sliced | 50 | 4 |
| Tangerine | 1 medium | 45 | 3 |
| Watermelon | 1 cup balls | 50 | 1 |

## Cooked Vegetables

| FOOD ITEM | ONE UNIT | CALORIES | FIBER (Grams) |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Acorn squash baked | 1 cup | 85 | 6 |
| Artichoke | 1 medium | 60 | 6 |
| Asparagus | 1 cup | 45 | 4 |
| Beets | 1 cup | 75 | 3 |
| Broccoli | 1 cup | 45 | 5 |
| Brussels sprouts | 1 cup | 60 | 4 |
| Cabbage | 1 cup | 35 | 4 |
| Cauliflower | 1 cup | 30 | 3 |
| Carrots | 1 cup | 70 | 5 |
| Celery, diced | 1 cup | 20 | 2 |
| Chinese cabbage | 1 cup | 20 | 3 |
| Collard greens | 1 cup | 50 | 5 |
| Corn | 1 ear | 75 | 2 |
| Eggplant | 1 cup | 30 | 3 |
| Green beans | 1 cup | 45 | 4 |
| Green peas | 1 cup | 140 | 8 |
| Kale | 1 cup | 35 | 3 |
| Leeks | 1 cup | 30 | 1 |
| Mushrooms | 1 cup | 40 | 3 |
| Mustard greens | 1 cup | 20 | 3 |
| Onion | 1 cup | 105 | 4 |
| Pumpkin | 1 cup | 50 | 3 |
| Red cabbage | 1 cup | 30 | 3 |
| Spinach | 1 cup | 40 | 4 |
| Sweet Potato | 1 cup | 200 | 4 |
| Swiss chard | 1 cup | 20 | 2 |

## Cooked Vegetables (continued)

| FOOD ITEM | ONE UNIT | CALORIES | FIBER (Grams) |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |
| Tomato juice | 1 cup | 40 | 1 |
| Tomato sauce / puree | 1 cup | 100 | 5 |
| Tomato soup, made with water | 1 cup | 85 | 0 |
| Tomato vegetable juice | 1 cup | 45 | 2 |
| Tomatoes | 1 cup | 70 | 3 |
| Turnip greens | 1 cup | 30 | 5 |
| Winter squash, baked | 1 cup | 70 | 7 |
| Zucchini, with skin | 1 cup | 30 | 3 |

## Raw Vegetables

| FOOD ITEM | ONE UNIT | CALORIES | FIBER (Grams) |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |
| Cabbage | 1 cup | 20 | 2 |
| Carrots | 1 cup | 50 | 4 |
| Cucumber | 1 cup | 15 | 1 |
| Endive | 1 cup | 10 | 2 |
| Peppers, green, chopped | 1 cup | 30 | 2 |
| Peppers, red, chopped | 1 cup | 30 | 2 |
| Romaine Lettuce | 1 cup | 10 | 1 |
| Spinach | 1 cup | 10 | 1 |
| Tomatoes, chopped | 1 cup | 40 | 2 |

## Starches and Grains

|  | SERVING SIZE | CALORIES | FIBER <br> GRAMS | PROTEIN(Grams) |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |
| Beans (black, pinto, etc) | $1 / 2$ cup | $115-140$ | $5-7$ | 7 |
| Bread (whole grain preferred) | 1 slice | $80-100$ | 3 | $3-5$ |
| English muffin | $1 / 2$ muffin | 80 | 1 | 2 |
| Lentils | $1 / 2$ cup, cooked | 115 | 8 | 9 |
| Rice (brown preferred) | $1 / 2$ cup, cooked | 110 | 2 | 3 |
| Pasta (whole grain preferred) | $1 / 2$ cup, cooked | 85 | 2 | 3 |
| Potato, baked | $1 / 2$ medium | 100 |  |  |
| Rice cakes | 2 large | 70 | 1 | 1 |
| Tortilla, corn | 2 tortillas | 120 | 4 | 2 |
| Cereals |  |  |  |  |
| Bran flakes | $3 / 4$ cup | 100 | 3 | 5 |
| Oatmeal, cooked | 1 cup | 1150 | 4 | 6 |
| Shredded wheat, bite size | $3 / 4$ cup | 3 | 4 |  |

## Taste Enhancers

|  | SERVING SIZE | CALORIES | FIBER <br> GRAMS | FAT GRAMS |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |
| Cheese, reduced fat | 1 ounce | $50-80$ | 0 | $2-5$ |
| Cheese, Parmesan | 3 tablespoons | 80 | 0 | 5 |
| Nuts | $1 / 2$ ounce | $80-100$ | 0 | $6-11$ |
| Olive oil | 1 teaspoon | 40 | 0 | 4 |
| Olives | 10 large | 50 | 1 | $4-7$ |
| Pine nuts, sesame seeds | 1 tablespoon | 50 | 1 | $4-7$ |
| Salad dressing, fat free / low | 2 tablespoons | $40-80$ | 0 | $0-2$ |

## Protein Snacks

| FOOD ITEM | SERVING SIZE | CALORIES | FIBER (Grams) |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |
| Cheese, mozzarella, low fat | 1 ounce (1 stick) | 70 | 8 |
| Cottage cheese | $1 / 2$ cup | 70 | 14 |
| Egg, hard boiled | 1 | 80 | 4 |
| Milk, nonfat or $1 \%$ | 1 cup | $90-110$ | 9 |
| Soup, tomato, made with nonfat milk | 1 cup | 120 | 6 |
| Soy crisps | 1 ounce | 110 | 7 |
| Yogurt, nonfat, sugar free | 1 six ounce carton | 100 | 11 |

## Shed a Pound a Week

If you cut 500 calories a day from your typical intake, you will lose a pound in a week's time. Look at some of the examples below. The more you cut, the more you lose!

EXAMPLE 1: A Xocai High-Antioxidant X Protein Meal Replacement Shake for breakfast vs. A blueberry muffin and a medium vanilla frappuccino

| FOOD ITEM | CALORIES | FAT (GRAMS) |
| :--- | :--- | :--- |
| Muffin and medium frappaccino | 930 | 33 |
| Xocai High-Antioxidant X <br> Protein Meal Replacement Shake | 190 | 3 |

You save: 740 calories and 30 grams of fat. If you typically have "just a muffin and coffee" every day for breakfast, you could lose $11 / 2$ pounds a week just by making this one swap!

EXAMPLE 2: Chicken breast vs. Red meat

| FOOD ITEM | CALORIES | FAT (GRAMS) |
| :--- | :--- | :--- |
| 6 oz. lean sirloin steak | 660 | 29 |
| 3 oz chicken breast | 150 | 4 |

You save: 510 calories and 25 grams of fat

EXAMPLE 3: Roast beef sandwich with cheese and mayonnaise vs. Turkey sandwich with vegetables and mustard

| FOOD ITEM | CALORIES | FAT (GRAMS) |
| :--- | :--- | :--- |
| Roast beef sandwich + cheese, <br> mayo | 850 | 30 |
| Turkey sandwich + <br> Vegetables, mustard | 350 | 5 |

You save: 500 calories and 25 grams of fat

## Shed a Pound a Week (continued)

EXAMPLE 4: French fries vs. Steamed vegetables

| FOOD ITEM | CALORIES | FAT (GRAMS) |
| :--- | :--- | :--- |
| 35 French fries | 560 | 28 |
| 1 cup zucchini + <br> 1 tablespoon Parmesan cheese | 60 | 2 |

You save: 500 calories and 26 grams of fat

EXAMPLE 5: Large restaurant Chinese chicken salad with fried noodles vs. 3 cups salad greens with 1 cup mixed fresh vegetables, 3 ounces grilled chicken breast and 2 tablespoons light salad dressing

| FOOD ITEM | CALORIES | FAT (GRAMS) |
| :--- | :--- | :--- |
| Chinese chicken salad | Up to 1000 | 61 |
| Greens / vegetables / <br> Chicken + light dressing | 320 | 11 |

You save: up to 680 calories and 50 grams of fat each time you choose this

## Good Snacks

Snacking sensibly between meals helps to keep your metabolism high and control cravings. Eat 2-3 snacks a day. When you combine some protein with a little carbohydrate it helps to satiate you and keep you going. Snacking on Xocai products, with their high antioxidant values, can also help boost weight loss. Components in cocoa flavanoids appear to decrease appetite, stabilize blood sugar levels, decrease inflammation and improve mood by optimizing production of brain chemicals like serotonin.

## HERE ARE SOME WHOLESOME SNACK IDEAS NEAR 100 CALORIES:

- Two sticks of celery with 1 Tbsp Peanut Butter
- Mini pita bread with a quarter of an avocado
- Two rice cakes with one wedge light cheese
- Ten raw almonds (raw, no salt)
- $1 / 2$ cup nonfat cottage cheese with $1 / 2$ cup blueberries
- 1 ounce turkey jerky with one rye cracker slice
- One 6-ounce light nonfat yogurt carton with 1 tablespoon raisins
- Toasted whole-grain waffle with cinnamon-sugar sprinkled
- One stick mozzarella cheese with one sesame breadstick
- $3 / 4$ cup tomato soup made with nonfat milk
- Three hard-boiled egg whites mashed with a little Dijon mustard and a sliced tomato
- 15 baby carrots with 2 tablespoons fat-free ranch dressing
- 12 ounces tomato juice
- $1 / 2$ cup edamame (soybeans, low salt)
- 1 cup whole strawberries with some melted Xocai Nuggets drizzled on top


## XOCAI PRODUCT SNACK CHOICES:

- Xocai X Power Squares (approx 33 calories each)
- Xocai Xobiotic Squares (approx 55 calories each)
- Xocai Omega Squares (approx 63 calories)
- Xocai Nuggets (approx 70 calories)
- Xocai Activ (approx 30 calories per ounce)
- $1 / 2$ Xocai Protein Bar (approx 70 calories)
- $1 / 2$ Xocai Powerhouse Cookie (approx 110 calories)


## QUIZ: Do You Know Your Snack Facts?

Just how much do you know about snacking habits? Snacking can be a wholesome practice when you select the right items and consume the proper balance of foods as snacks to maintain your energy level. Regrettably, more often than not we wait until the dreaded "snack attack" and then our hunger drives us to make less-than-desirable choices. Below are a few questions testing how much you understand about snacking.

1. What is America's favorite snack food, and how much of it do we eat every year?
a. Pretzels. We eat about 50 million pounds
b. Peanuts. We eat about 25 million pounds
c. Cookies. We eat about 700 million pounds
d. Potato chips. We eat about 1.2 billion pounds
2. What does the original pretzel twist's shape represent?
a. A child's playground game, similar to hopscotch
b. A mother's arms holding a baby
c. A person's arms crossed in prayer
d. The coat of arms of the Hapsburg family in Germany, for whom the pretzel was invented
3. You are really craving something sweet. You run into the local food mart and find an array of prepackaged goodies. Which of the following would have the fewest calories?
a. A package of two frosted cupcakes
b. A package of two crème-filled sponge cakes
c. A single-serve apple pie
d. A single-serve pack of four powdered-sugar donuts
4. Popcorn can be a healthy snack, but you need to choose carefully. Which of the following popcorns have the MOST calories per cup?
a. Cheese flavored
b. Kettle-corn flavored
c. Cinnamon-butter flavored
d. Extra-butter flavored
5. Rice cakes can be the start of a healthy snack. The plain ones have about 35 calories. To keep calories down, which of the following would best top your rice cake?
a. 1 tablespoon of cream cheese
b. 2 tablespoon of ricotta cheese and a sprinkle of cinnamon sugar
c. 1 tablespoon of strawberry jam
d. 1 tablespoon of peanut butter

## QUIZ: Do You Know Your Snack Facts?

(continued)
6. You crave something smooth and creamy. Which of the following choices has the fewest calories?
a. A single-serve rice pudding
b. A single-serve chocolate pudding
c. One 6-ounce carton fruit-on-the-bottom yogurt
d. Half a banana with an ounce of Xocai Activ syrup
7. You're rummaging around the house for something to eat. You have the following available to you and can't decide which would do the least damage to your diet, caloriewise. Which one should you choose?
a. Four fig bars
b. Three graham-cracker sheets
c. 50 pistachio nuts
d. 2 ounces of beef jerky
8. You have several leftovers in your refrigerator that look like tempting snacks. Which of the following will use the fewest calories from your calorie budget?
a. A piece of lasagna, about 3 inches square
b. Two fried-chicken drumsticks
c. 1 cup of homemade macaroni and cheese
d. 1 cup of shrimp fried rice
9. Sometimes when we think we're hungry, we're really just thirsty. If you think drinking something might help quench your thirst and your hunger pangs, which would be the best choice?
a. 12 ounces of lemonade
b. 12 ounces of cranberry juice
c. 12 ounces of grapefruit juice
d. 12 ounces of canned mango nectar
10. During an afternoon of shopping and with more still to buy, you need a little something to get you through the afternoon. What's the best choice from the mall?
a. One large soft pretzel
b. One medium-sized fruit smoothie
c. 1 cup of low-fat frozen yogurt
d. A cup of chicken noodle soup from the deli

## The Wonder of Water

Next to oxygen, water stands out as the element most essential for survival. We are able to go without having food for nearly two months, but without water only a few days. Nevertheless most of us haven't a clue how much water we should take in. The truth is, many people live in a continually dehydrated condition.

Water is a critical component in chemical reactions of digestion and metabolism Water also lubricates our joints. We actually need water to breathe: our lungs have to be moist to breath in oxygen and breathe out carbon dioxide. You can actually lose a pint of fluid every day simply exhaling.

If you don't drink enough water, you can hinder every facet of your physiology. Dr. Howard Flaks, a bariatric (obesity) specialist in Beverly Hills, Calif, says, "By not drinking enough water, many people incur excess body fat, poor muscle tone and size, decreased digestive efficiency and organ function, increased toxicity in the body, joint and muscle soreness and water retention."

Feeling puffy or bloated? If you're not drinking an adequate amount of water, your body may retain fluids to compensate. Ironically, fluid retention can often be eradicated by consuming more water, not less.
"Proper water intake is a key to weight loss," says Dr. Donald Robertson, medical director of the Southwest Bariatric Nutrition Center in Scottsdale, Arizona. "If people who are trying to lose weight don't drink enough water, the body can't metabolize the fat adequately. Retaining fluid also keeps weight up." If you are dehydrated, your hunger reflex may be stimulated. Often, when you wake up in the morning with a gnawing feeling in your stomach, it's simply thirst masquerading as hunger. Drinking an 8 to 16 ounce glass of water with some lemon to start your day is a health-promoting weight loss strategy. Not only does it hydrate you, it also adds to your antioxidant intake.

The minimum for a healthy person is generally recommended to be 8 to 10 eight-ounce glasses a day. You'll need more if you exercise a lot or live in a hot climate. For weight loss, you should drink $1 / 2$ to one ounce of water for every pound of your desired weight. For example, if your target weight is 150 pounds, you should consume 75 to 150 ounces of water per day. You may want to talk to your own physician for his or her recommendations.

Your water consumption should be spread throughout the day and evening. You might wonder: If I drink anywhere near this much, won't I continually be running to the restroom? Sure. However after a couple of weeks, your bladder has a tendency to adapt and you'll urinate less often, but in greater amounts.

## REPLACE WHAT YOU LOSE

Following every 30 -minutes of physical exercise, drink two 8 oz . glasses of water to replace your body fluids. Also, consider making use of a sports bottle to make it easier to stay hydrated as you work out.

It's important to understand that while soda pop, coffee, and alcoholic beverages contain water, they are actually dehydrating fluids. Not only do they eliminate the water contained in them, but they also cause you to lose further amounts of water from your body's reserves

## LOOK BEFORE YOU DRINK

The next time you're thirsty, it would be wise to think before you drink. While many say "you are what you eat," the expression is more accurately "you are what you drink." The human body is composed of $25 \%$ solids and $75 \%$ water. Brain tissue is said to consist of $85 \%$ water. While some foods contribute fluids to your system, the majority of your day-to-day water requirements are met through the liquids you drink. Apart from simple water, consumers are presented with a mind-blowing assortment of juices, juice drinks, vitamin-fortified waters, sports drinks, energy drinks, and teas, making determining the right choice difficult.

When evaluating beverages, an excellent starting point is reading through the nutrition facts label. For example, sodas or fruit beverages will often be loaded with calories and sugar, but low in nutrition. Not only can these types of empty calories heap on the pounds, their high-sugar concentration might actually slow down the rate at which your body absorbs fluids. Also, when you notice high-fructose corn syrup near the top of the ingredient list, you know that the drink is loaded with simple sugars.

While too much sugar can be a problem, a little carbohydrate in beverages can help to maintain blood sugar while you are exercising. Also, a mixture of several carbohydrate forms in drinks helps get carbohydrates into working muscle more efficiently than using just one carbohydrate source. Make sure that you are getting those carbohydrates from natural forms. Low glycemic (meaning slowly absorbed) sweeteners like Agave Cactus syrup are a good option. You'll also want to monitor the calories.

## STAYING HYDRATED

You may become dehydrated before you are actually thirsty. Most people consider "dry mouth" a signal of thirst. However, a dry mouth is the last outward sign of severe dehydration. Damage occurs to the body at a persistent lower level of hydration. Because of a gradually failing sensitivity to thirst, many people become chronically and increasingly dehydrated.

One way to monitor your hydration is to note the color of your urine. It should be pale yellow or clear. Darker color usually means more concentrated urine. In that case, you should increase your fluid intake.

Make sure to watch for other dehydration signs and symptoms such as:

- Heartburn, stomach ache
- Non-infectious recurring or chronic pain
- Low back pain
- Headache
- Mental irritation and depression
- Water retention (ironic but true!)

