

HealthBytes

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NHP news alert

Importance of using a registered healthcare provider with a valid NAMAF practice number



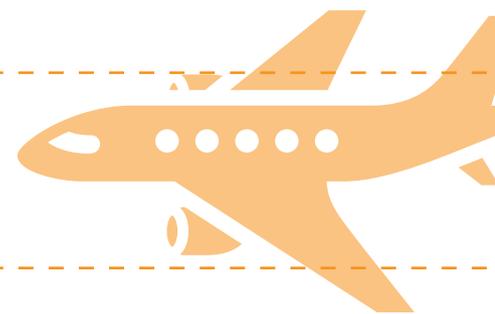
In order for any healthcare provider to claim from any medical aid fund both the facility and the individual provider must be registered with NAMAF. NAMAF's registration of such facility and/or individual service provider is subject to the facility having been declared fit for use by the Ministry of Health and Social Services (MoHSS), the individual practitioner has been accredited with and registered by the Health Professions Council of Namibia (HPCNA) as well as having received a certificate of Good Standing from the Ministry of Inland Revenue.

Once such criteria has been complied with, NAMAF may issue such health facility or healthcare provider with a registration and associated practice number which will allow that provider to make use of the NAMAF Benchmark Tariff codes as well as submit claims with the medical aid fund for claiming purposes.

In order to remain a registered practitioner, healthcare providers need to ensure that their practice remains in good standing with the Receiver of Revenue, they comply with operating requirements as determined by the MoHSS, remain in good standing with the HPCNA and lastly renew their annual registration with NAMAF.

Failure to adhere to any of the above may result in NAMAF resorting to a temporary suspension of practice numbers in terms of the Act on Medical Aid Funds (Act. 23 of 1995) until such time that all registration requirements have been met. Members are at risk to the extent that should they have used the services of any healthcare providers with a suspended practice number during such time, then such services are deemed not to be eligible for processing against a person's medical aid benefits.

Health wise Getting sick after travel



We hope you had great experiences and made many wonderful new memories, but the truth is that sometimes travelers come home with more than souvenirs. Fortunately, most after-travel illnesses are mild and not a concern, such as a head cold or an upset stomach. However, some symptoms may warrant a trip to the doctor.

Fever

If you have been in a country with malaria and develop a fever within a month after you leave, see a doctor immediately. Most fevers are caused by less serious illnesses. But because malaria is a medical emergency, your doctor must first rule it out. A fever could still be malaria even if you took antimalarial medicine because the medicine is not 100% effective. Most malaria develops within 30 days, but rare cases can lie dormant for a year or longer. So always tell your doctor about any travel you have done, even if it was months ago.

Persistent diarrhea

Most cases of diarrhea go away by themselves in a few days, but see your doctor if you have diarrhea that lasts for 2 weeks or more. Persistent diarrhea can make you lose nutrients and is often caused by a parasitic infection that will need to be treated with special drugs.

Skin problems

Skin problems (rashes, boils, fungal infections, bug bites) are among the most common illnesses reported by people who have returned from international travel. Most skin problems are not serious, but they may be a sign of a serious illness, especially if you also have a fever.

At the doctor

Be sure to tell your doctor about your travel, including where you went and what you did on your trip. This information will help your doctor consider infections that are rare or not found in the United States.

Make sure to include all relevant details:

- What you did on your trip.
- How long you were gone.
- Where you stayed (fancy hotel, native dwelling, tent).
- What you ate and drank while you were there.
- Whether you were bitten by bugs.
- Whether you swam in freshwater.
- Any other possible exposures (sex, tattoos, piercings).

Source: <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/page/getting-sick-after-travel>

Healthy body

Detox water health benefits and myths



There's a lot of hype about the supposed health benefits of "detox water."

Yes, staying hydrated is important for health. It's often recommended that you drink 8 glasses of water per day. However, some people think adding extra ingredients to water boosts its health benefits. The result, called detox water, is said to help your body get rid of toxins, improve your energy levels and help you lose weight.

What is detox water?

Detox water is water that has been infused with the flavours of fresh fruits, vegetables or herbs. It's sometimes referred to as fruit-infused water or fruit-flavoured water.

You can make detox water at home in lots of different ways, using any combination of fruits, vegetables and herbs that you like. It's made by infusing flavour, rather than juicing or blending, detox water contains very few calories. That makes it a popular drink for detox regimens like the "lemon detox" or "master cleanse."

Detox water is also often recommended in weight loss plans, especially in place of high-sugar drinks like sugary soda and fruit juice.

Detox water is made by infusing water with fruits, vegetables or herbs. You can make your own at home using a variety of flavours.

How to make detox water

Making detox water at home is very simple. All you need is water and a selection of fruits, vegetables and herbs. Simply chop up your ingredients and add them to hot or cold water, depending on your preference. The more of an ingredient you use, the stronger the flavour will become.

If you're making a cold drink, you can leave the detox water in the fridge for 1 to 12 hours to allow the flavours to infuse more deeply. Be sure to remove the ingredients after this time though, so they don't begin to decompose. If you're in a hurry, crushing or bruising your fruit and herbs before using them can help release the flavours more quickly.

Here are some popular detox water recipe combinations:

- Cucumber and mint
- Lemon and ginger
- Blackberry and orange
- Lemon and cayenne pepper
- Watermelon and mint
- Grapefruit and rosemary
- Orange and lemon
- Lemon and lime
- Strawberry and basil
- Apple and cinnamon

To make detox water, add fruits, vegetables and herbs to water and then let it stand. Crushing or bruising fruits and herbs can help release more of their flavours.

Health claims about detox water

Detox water is said to have many health benefits, including:

- Weight loss
- Toxin removal or detox
- Balancing the pH of the body
- Better digestive health
- Boosting immune function
- Improving mood
- Increasing energy levels
- Improving complexion



The exact properties of detox water will vary depending on the ingredients you use and the strength of the infusion. Many of the health claims for detox water can be attributed to the water itself, rather than the ingredients it's flavoured with. That's because you don't get that many nutrients from the ingredients in detox water, especially not compared to eating them in their whole form.

Detox water has been claimed to help remove toxins, help with weight loss, balance your pH and boost your immune system.

Real health benefits

Below is a detailed look at the science behind detox water's health claims. A few are valid, even if they are a little exaggerated in some instances.

Helps with weight loss

Drinking water may help you lose weight, and this applies to detox water too. Water has been shown to temporarily raise your metabolic rate, so you burn more calories.

Studies have shown that drinking 1/2 a litre of water can increase your metabolic rate by up to 30% for about an hour. In fact, people who drink the recommended amount of water as part of a weight loss programme tend to lose more weight than those who don't.

One study found that overweight adults who drank 1/2 a litre of water before their meals lost 40% more weight than those who didn't. This can be partially explained by a rise in metabolism, but may also be due to the effect water has on your appetite. Drinking water has been linked to reduced hunger, so if you drink water before a meal, you may eat less.

Improves digestive health

Hydration is important for digestive health and maintaining regular bowel movements. Chronic dehydration can cause constipation, which can make you feel bloated and sluggish. Drinking plenty of water may help food pass smoothly through your gut and prevent you from becoming constipated.

Improves mood and energy levels

Even mild dehydration can affect mood, concentration and energy levels. Studies have shown that dehydration levels of around 1% can significantly decrease mood, reduce concentration span and cause headaches.

One study looked at adults who consumed less than 1.2 litres of water per day. When they increased their water intake to 2.5 litres per day, they were happier, had more energy and felt calmer.

If you aren't drinking enough, increasing your water intake could improve your mood and give you more energy.

Boosts immune function

This is one claim about detox water that may be a little exaggerated. It's true that eating fruits and vegetables and even fruit juices can help

support your immune system. In particular, vitamin C has been shown to benefit your immune system when consumed on a regular basis.

However, the amount of these nutrients that you would get from an infusion like detox water is likely to be minimal and highly variable. Although it is theoretically possible, its unlikely detox water has any meaningful effect on immune function.

Drinking detox water could help you lose weight, have better digestive health and make you happier. However, you will get all of these benefits from drinking regular water too.

Myths about detox water

There are also many myths surrounding detox water. Some of these are not supported by science, but others have been downright shown to be false.

Myth 1: It detoxifies your body

Detoxification is a popular claim for many diets, cleanses and nutrition products like detox water. Detox products often claim to facilitate health and well-being by eliminating toxins from the body and aiding in weight loss.

However, both "toxins" and "detox" are vague terms that don't really define what is eliminated or how it happens. Your body has well-designed detox pathways that eliminate toxins from the body. There is currently no evidence that any product or diet speeds them up or makes them more efficient.

Myth 2: It balances your pH

"Alkalisising" foods and drinks are a popular dietary trend at the moment. They are said to promote a more alkaline environment in the body. According to the acid-alkaline theory of disease, this will promote better health. This theory isn't supported by science, since it is impossible to alter the pH of your blood or cells through the foods you eat.

Myth 3: It improves your complexion

As with many other detox products, some people claim that detox water flushes toxins from your skin and improves its appearance. There is little evidence to back up these claims. Drinking water will improve your skin's hydration if you're dehydrated. However, it won't change the appearance of your skin unless the dehydration is severe.

Detox water won't help you flush toxins from your body or make it more alkaline. There is also no evidence that it improves complexion.

Take home message

The idea that you can speed up and improve your body's detox pathways by drinking detox water is false. That said, it is still a healthy drink with a few health benefits. Nevertheless, you could probably get most of these benefits from drinking regular water. However, people often find plain water boring.

If infusing your water with fruits and vegetables means that you drink more water and less sugary drinks, then it can only be a good thing.

Evidence based
Source: <https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/detox-water-101>

Healthy life

8 Tips for keeping cool on a hot day

During the summer months, temperatures rise and it can be more difficult to stay cool. Children and babies are more sensitive to heat so it is important to keep them cool and comfortable. Here are some tips for keeping cool on a hot day:

Tip 1 Limit time outdoors

Limit the amount of time spent outside between 10 am and 4 pm when the temperature is the hottest.

Tip 2 Drink water

Make sure you and your child is drinking plenty of water, even if not thirsty. Stay away from sugary drinks or drinks with caffeine to avoid dehydration. Replenishing electrolytes such as salt, potassium and calcium are necessary if you or your child has been exercising or exposed to heat for a long period of time.

Tip 3 Eat light foods

Prepare foods that don't require cooking to avoid turning on the oven and creating more heat. Some great foods that don't require cooking are salads, fruits and vegetables, which are all great sources of nutrition. Popsicles and frozen fruit are also a delicious way to cool down.

Tip 4 Clothing

Dress in light-coloured, loose-fitting clothing. Light clothing helps reflect sunlight and keeps you cooler. If you and your family plan to be in the sun for a long period of time, consider buying clothing designed to block UV rays. A hat with a big brim or sunglasses also will keep you cool and help protect the eyes from the sun.

Tip 5 Footwear that breathes

Wearing footwear that breathes is a great way to help you cool down. Tennis shoes with cotton socks can be great for certain outdoor activities, while sandals with straps also can work well.

Tip 6 Get in the water

Take a swim or spend time at a local pool to cool off and have some fun. The water will help cool you off; just be careful of the sun. Make sure to reapply a SPF 30 or higher sunscreen every 2 hours to avoid sunburn.

Sunscreen is not recommended for children under 6 months of age. Babies have higher surface area to body ratio so may have a higher exposure to chemicals in sunscreen. Removable mesh screens for car



windows, lightweight clothes that cover their arms and legs, a wide-brimmed hat and sunglasses are a great ways to protect your infant from the sun.

Tip 7 Watch the pavement

Pavements and roads heat up quickly and can burn the skin. Avoid activities on or around pavements and roads to prevent a hot surface-related injury and make sure to always wearing appropriate footwear.

Tip 8 Use fans

If air conditioning is not available, use fans to help circulate the air. At night, make sure there is room for the air to circulate around your the room.

If you do have air conditioning, make sure it doesn't get too cold for babies. The best room temperature is between 18 and 23 degrees Celsius.

Source: <https://riseandshine.childrensnational.org/8-tips-for-keeping-cool-on-a-hot-day-2/>

Healthy body

The health benefits of water

We all need water to survive, but how exactly does it help?

Your body uses water in all its cells, organs, and tissues to help regulate its temperature and maintain other bodily functions. Because your body loses water through breathing, sweating, and digestion, it's important to rehydrate by drinking fluids and eating foods that contain water.

The amount of water you need depends on a variety of factors, including the climate you live in, how physically active you are, and whether you're experiencing an illness or have any other health problems.

Water protects your tissues, spinal cord, and joints

Water does more than just quench your thirst and regulate your body's temperature; it also keeps the tissues in your body moist. You know how it feels when your eyes, nose, or mouth gets dry?

Keeping your body hydrated helps it retain optimum levels of moisture in these sensitive areas, as well as in the blood, bones, and the brain. In addition, water helps protect the spinal cord, and it acts as a lubricant and cushion for your joints.

Water helps your body remove waste

Adequate water intake enables your body to excrete waste through perspiration, urination, and defecation. The kidneys and liver use it to help flush out waste, as do your intestines. Water can also keep you from getting constipated by softening your stools and helping move the food you've eaten through your intestinal tract.

However, it should be noted that there is no evidence to prove that increasing your fluid intake will cure constipation.

Water aids in digestion

Digestion starts with saliva, the basis of which is water. Digestion relies on enzymes that are found in saliva to help break down food and liquid and to dissolve minerals and other nutrients. Proper digestion makes minerals and nutrients more accessible to the body.

Water is also necessary to help you digest soluble fiber. With the help of water, this fiber dissolves easily and benefits your bowel health by making well-formed, soft stools that are easy to pass.

Water prevents you from becoming dehydrated

Your body loses fluids when you engage in vigorous exercise, sweat in high heat, or come down with a fever or contract an illness that causes vomiting or diarrhea. If you're losing fluids for any of these reasons, it's important to increase your fluid intake so that you can restore your body's natural hydration levels.

Your doctor may also recommend that you drink more fluids to help treat other health conditions, like bladder infections and urinary tract stones.

If you're pregnant or nursing, you may want to consult with your physician about your fluid intake because your body will be using more fluids than usual, especially if you're breastfeeding.

How much water do you need?

There's no hard and fast rule, and many individuals meet their daily hydration needs by simply drinking water when they're thirsty, according to a report on nutrient recommendations from the Institute of Medicine of the National Academies. In fact, most people who are in good physical health get enough fluids by drinking water and other beverages when they're thirsty, and also by drinking a beverage with each of their meals, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. If you're not sure about your hydration level, look at your urine. If it's clear, you're in good shape. If it's dark, you're probably dehydrated.

Source: <https://www.everydayhealth.com/water-health/water-body-health.aspx>





Healthy baby

Keeping your baby hydrated during summer

Most people know that adults need to drink about eight glasses of water per day, but keeping babies hydrated has some special considerations.

Water makes up about 60% of human bodies. We constantly lose water through urine, sweat and breathing. So how do we replace all the water we lose and stay well-hydrated? Most people know that adults need to drink about 8 glasses of water per day, but keeping babies hydrated has some special considerations.

Does my baby need water?

Healthy newborns get all the water they need from breast milk and/or formula, even when it's hot outside.

They do not need extra water. Giving a young baby water can decrease his/her appetite and prevent the baby from getting the nutrients needed from breast milk or formula. Also, babies under 6 months of age who get too much water can develop a rare but serious condition called "water intoxication." This condition can cause seizures.

The safest thing to do is to give your baby only breast milk/formula. Please check with your child's doctor before giving your baby any water, and remember, always mix formula according to the package instructions! Making formula "last longer" by adding more water than recommended can lead to water intoxication or poor weight gain.

So, when can I give my baby water?

After 6 months of age, it is safe to give babies water. Introducing sippy cups with water at this age is a great idea. It will get them used to cups and drinking water at the same time.

How much water does my baby need?

A 6 to 12 month old baby needs two to 250ml of water per day on top of the water they get from breast milk/formula. Taking sips from their cups throughout the day will usually get them the water they need. In general, babies 6 months and older can drink as much water as they want and will slowly increase their water intake as they rely more on solid foods for their caloric needs.

Remember to make sure they are still drinking breast milk/formula and eating a varied, nutritious diet. Once babies turn 1 year old, they need about 4 cups of water per day (1 litre.). At this age, they rely on more solid foods than breast milk/formula for nutrition.

What kind of water can I give my baby?

Preboiled tap water generally works well for mixing formula or for drinking from a sippy cup. It is okay to use bottled water, but babies do need some tap water when they start getting teeth. Fluoride, a mineral that helps build strong enamel and keeps cavities from forming, is added to the public water supply, and filtering tap water does not remove fluoride.

Source: <https://riseandshine.childrensnational.org/keeping-your-baby-hydrated-during-summer/>

Healthy infants and children

Signs of dehydration in infants and children

Be alert for the following warning signs of dehydration, and notify the pediatrician immediately if any of them develop.

Mild to moderate dehydration:

- Plays less than usual
- Urinates less frequently (for infants, fewer than 6 wet diapers per day)
- Parched, dry mouth
- Fewer tears when crying
- Sunken soft spot of the head in an infant or toddler
- Stools will be loose if dehydration is caused by diarrhea; if dehydration is due to other fluid loss (vomiting, lack of fluid intake), there will be decreased bowel movements

Severe dehydration (in addition to the symptoms and signals already listed):

- Very fussy
- Excessively sleepy
- Sunken eyes
- Cool, discolored hands and feet
- Wrinkled skin
- Urinates only one to two times per day

Source: <https://www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/injuries-emergencies/Pages/dehydration.aspx> Caring for Your Baby and Young Child: Birth to Age 5, 6th Edition

The information contained on this newsletter should not be used as a substitute for the medical care and advice of your pediatrician. There may be variations in treatment that your pediatrician may recommend based on individual facts and circumstances.

Healthcare fraud, waste and abuse

Healthcare fraud, waste and abuse costs the healthcare industry millions, if not billions, every year. This cost eventually leads to higher healthcare costs and medical aid contributions for which

you, the member, pay for. Awareness of these issues is an important aspect in order to spot and identify healthcare fraud, waste and abuse.

If you still have questions or concerns after talking to your healthcare provider, inform your medical aid or call the toll-free fraud hotline at 0800 647 000.

Disclaimer

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