



### **Cooling foods for hot weather**

The foods we eat not only keep us healthy but can help our body cope with summer's heat. Did you know that foods with a high water content replenish the water and electrolytes lost during sweating? In fact the production of sweat and perspiration is one of our body's main methods of temperature regulation. Did you know being active in the summer heat, means you can lose between 100ml to 1litre of water an hour through sweat alone! Even mild dehydration with a loss as little as 2% of your body weight alters the body's ability to function efficiently and affects our energy levels, mood and vitality.

### **Water**

The Ministry of health says that the basic adequate intake of water is:

- Adult women: total daily water intake of 2.8l (food and water) of which 8 cups (2.1l) should be fluids (plain water and other drinks)
- Adult men: total daily water intake is 3.4l (food and water) of which 10 cups (2.6l) should be fluids (plain water and other drinks)

However in hot weather we need to adjust this for our levels of activity and loss through perspiration.

### **Coconut water**

Sipping upon coconut water is a great way to cool down. Not only does it have a water content of approximately 94%, it also contains some of the minerals lost during sweating such as sodium, potassium, magnesium and calcium.

### **Watermelon**

Enjoy sliced or juiced, this summer seasonal fruit contains up to 92% water. You could even freeze and then blend it to make a granita. This refreshing summer fruit also contains vitamin C, lycopene and vitamin A

### **Cucumber**

Cucumbers have an even higher water content of up to 95 %. The flesh is another good source of vitamin C and A and the skin is a source of potassium and trace minerals such as silica and molybdenum

### **Citrus**

Including lemons, limes, oranges and more, these fruits contain in excess of 87 % water and are another excellent source of vitamin C, potassium, folate and antioxidants. You could freeze freshly squeezed lemon juice in an ice cube tray or slice to add to drinks or mix with garlic and olive oil to make a salad dressing. You could add mandarin or orange segments to your salad or freeze and blend as another idea for a refreshing granita

### **Leafy greens**

This could include a selection of greens such as lettuce, spinach, cabbage, kale and rocket – all packed full of antioxidants, fibre, vitamin C, folate and calcium. Try adding some to your smoothie, sandwich or meal. You might be surprised to learn that their water content can be more than 91%

### **Peppermint tea**

As well as being good for digestion and nausea, the menthol found in peppermint leaves provides a refreshing and cooling drink – try adding a spring of fresh peppermint to a jug of water to enjoy on a hot summers day

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