Kidney Health Australia position on water drinking

The desirable amount of water to drink each day has been promoted to the public in recent years to be 8 glasses each of 8oz (=240ml) each 24-hour period. This view has been publicised by water authorities and bottled water manufacturers with endorsement of this view by Kidney Health Australia.

A critical review of the evidence supporting this position was conducted by KHA in 2003. A distinct lack of evidence supporting the 8 X 8 glasses of water each day policy was found to exist in the published literature.

As a result of this review KHA Board of Directors adopted the following position in regard to water intake:

- There is a lack of evidence that drinking water in excess of thirst is beneficial for the health of Australians living in temperate regions and not exercising strenuously

- To satisfy thirst, water is the recommended fluid. Drinks containing sugar or caffeine or alcohol all may cause or worsen health related problems and should be avoided except in modest quantities.

- The daily fluid intake needs are increased in:
  - All residents in tropical or hot climates
  - Individuals practising strenuous exercise
  - Certain medical conditions characterised by excess obligatory fluid loss
  - Certain medical conditions requiring an increased urine flow

- The daily fluid intake needs are decreased in most patients with:
  - End stage kidney failure
  - Certain cardiac and respiratory conditions

- From the kidney viewpoint all fluids including those containing caffeine and alcohol should count towards the daily fluid total

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