

# You Asked!

**Q.** I've heard that when you feel thirsty, you're already dehydrated. Is this true?

—Tina V., Kentucky

**A.** Absolutely, says Cynthia Sass, R.D., a SHAPE contributing editor and author of *Cinch! Conquer Cravings, Drop Pounds, and Lose Inches*. “Thirst is your body’s way of telling you that your optimal water volume is down by about 2 percent, which is quite significant.”

The Institute of Medicine recommends taking in 11 cups of fluid a day. “If you’ve been sweating, you may need more,” says Sass, who points out that all liquids count, even tea and coffee. “If you drink caffeinated beverages regularly, your body is used to processing them, so you’ll only experience a diuretic effect if you consume more than usual.” Fruits and veggies also add up, since most are at least 80 percent water. A cup of watermelon, for example, has about half a cup of water.

Sip 6 to 12 ounces of H<sub>2</sub>O every half hour to stay hydrated when exercising.



**Q.** Working out can be a pain in the butt—literally! Is there anything I can do to knock out the kinks?

—Ashley W., New Mexico

**A.** First, change up your routine so you’re not just engaging your gluteal muscles, says Nadya Swedan, M.D., a sports medicine specialist in New York City. “Overstressing a muscle causes little tears that lead to tightness and soreness.” And continuing to fire fatigued glutes can put strain on your hips and lower back.

If you’ve been doing mostly leg work, such as running hills, group cycling, or squats, add in some arm action with swimming or boxing. And cool

down with stretches to relax your rear end, says Swedan. A good one: Lie on your back and cross your right ankle over your left knee. Grab behind your left knee and pull your legs toward you. Hold for 30 seconds and switch legs. A foam roller, such as the SilverSport SilverShaper Massaging Fitness Roller (\$40; dickssportinggoods.com), can release tension too. Sit on it, roll until you find a knot, and hold for 15 seconds; repeat.

● WANT YOUR QUESTION TO BE ANSWERED BY THE EXPERTS AT SHAPE? Write to us at [youasked@shape.com](mailto:youasked@shape.com).