



BRACE & DRANK Challenge Instructions



Start → Monday, July 9
End → Sunday, August 5

For the next four weeks, you will practice two healthy habits each day: 1) abdominal bracing and 2) drinking plenty of water.

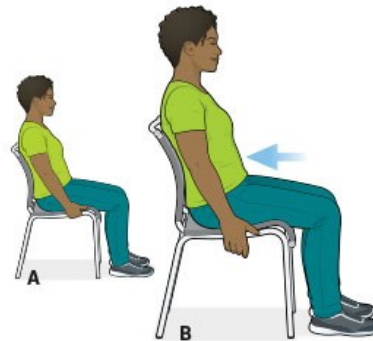
1. You will practice abdominal bracing for an increasing amount of time every day as well as practice several variations throughout the four weeks. **Use the calendar on page 2 to track your daily abdominal bracing.**
2. In addition to abdominal bracing each day, you will also track your water intake. The goal of this portion of the challenge is to find your ideal intake—the amount of water that makes you feel healthy and energized. You will complete a reflection activity at the end of each week to help you find that perfect amount. **Use page 4 to track your daily water intake.**
3. We encourage you to participate in all of the mini-challenges that will occur throughout the four week challenge. Check your emails so you don't miss out!
4. At the end of the challenge, **complete this post-survey for a chance to win a participation prize!** The survey will also be sent out via email.

What is abdominal bracing...?

Much like a plank, abdominal bracing is a static exercise that involves your core muscles—the abdominal and back muscles around your midsection.

Abdominal bracing is a great alternative to planking. It is a low-impact exercise that targets and strengthens your lower back and involves very little strain. Abdominal bracing also has a positive impact on your overall health, straightening your posture and promoting deep breathing.

The best thing about abdominal bracing? Everyone can do it! The pictures on the right display two ways you can perform abdominal bracing, either laying down or sitting upright in a chair.



A proper abdominal brace:

- Always remember to take and hold a deep abdominal breath before bracing
- "Brace" your abdominal muscles by contracting them as though you were going to get punched in the stomach
- Keep your belly from protruding out and pulling in

BRACE...

Print this calendar to track your abdominal bracing progress each day. Check or color in the box when you have completed the exercise of that day. See **page 3** for pictures and descriptions of the bracing variations you can perform throughout the challenge. Each variation works the same muscles, so choose whichever form is best for you. Use **pages 5 and 6** as a reflection guide as you progress through each week.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>July</i> 9 10 seconds Abdominal brace standing up	<input type="checkbox"/> 10 10 seconds Abdominal brace standing up	<input type="checkbox"/> 11 20 seconds Abdominal brace standing up	<input type="checkbox"/> 12 20 seconds Abdominal brace sitting up	<input type="checkbox"/> 13 30 seconds Abdominal brace sitting up	<input type="checkbox"/> 14 30 seconds Abdominal brace sitting up	15 REST
<input type="checkbox"/> 16 40 seconds Abdominal brace laying down	<input type="checkbox"/> 17 40 seconds Abdominal brace laying down	<input type="checkbox"/> 18 50 seconds Abdominal brace laying down	<input type="checkbox"/> 19 50 seconds Abdominal brace standing up	<input type="checkbox"/> 20 1:00 minute Abdominal brace standing up	<input type="checkbox"/> 21 1:00 minute Abdominal brace standing up	22 REST
<input type="checkbox"/> 23 1:10 minute Abdominal brace sitting up	<input type="checkbox"/> 24 1:10 minute Abdominal brace sitting up	<input type="checkbox"/> 25 1:20 minute Abdominal brace sitting up	<input type="checkbox"/> 26 1:20 minute Abdominal brace laying down	<input type="checkbox"/> 27 1:30 minute Abdominal brace laying down	<input type="checkbox"/> 28 1:30 minute Abdominal brace laying down	29 REST
<input type="checkbox"/> 30 1:30 minute Abdominal brace standing up	<input type="checkbox"/> 31 1:40 minute Abdominal brace standing up	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>August</i> 1 1:40 minute Abdominal brace sitting up	<input type="checkbox"/> 2 1:50 minute Abdominal brace sitting up	<input type="checkbox"/> 3 1:50 minute Abdominal brace laying down	<input type="checkbox"/> 4 2:00 minutes Abdominal brace laying down	<input type="checkbox"/> 5 2:00 minutes Abdominal brace standing up End of Challenge!

BRACING TIPS →

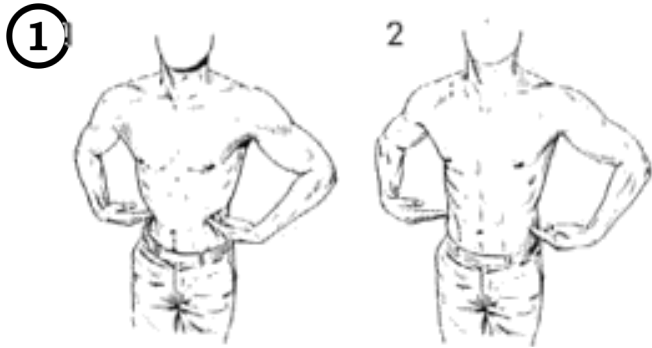
Keep your body straight
when standing up

Think of something that
makes you happy

Breathe in, brace, breathe out

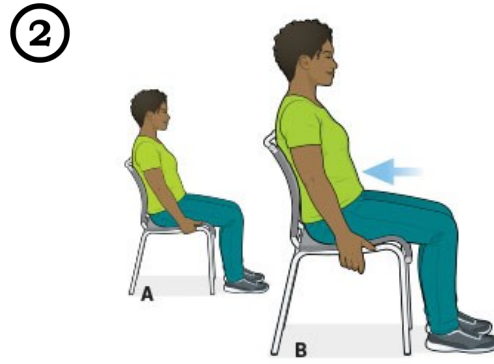
Coach & motivate yourself

Abdominal Bracing Instructional Guide



Abdominal Brace Standing Up

Stand up with a neutral spine, with hips slightly tucked behind you.



Abdominal Brace Sitting Up

Sit up straight with a neutral spine in a sturdy and stationary chair.



Abdominal Brace Laying Down

Lay flat on your back and bend your knees.

Basic Instructions for Abdominal Bracing

- Position yourself in one of the above forms
- Breathe in and out normally as you alternate tightening your abdominal muscles and relaxing
 - Relax and repeat for the designated time on the previous page

TIP: Engage your abdominal muscles as if somebody is going to punch you in the gut!



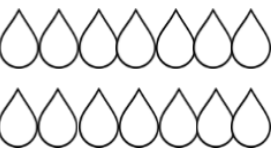
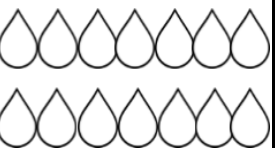
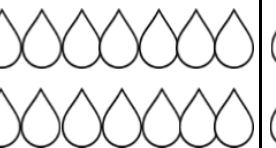

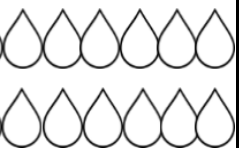





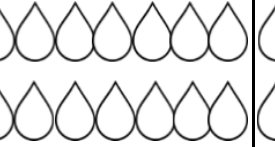
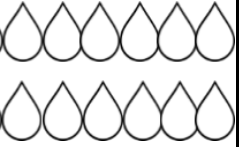



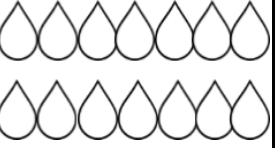
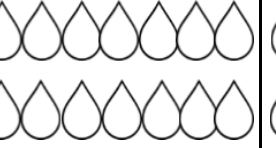
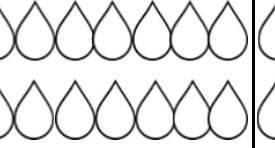

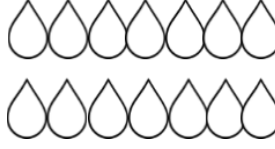






...and DRANK

 = one 8-ounce cup of water

Print this page to track your daily water intake! For each 8-ounce cup of water you drink, color in one water droplet.

For the past several years, the recommended water intake has been 8 eight-ounce glasses of water (64 ounces) per day. However, current research from the Institutes of Medicine actually recommends that men should drink about 100 ounces of water and women 73 ounces of water per day. Start with 64 ounces and work your way up to determine your ideal amount throughout the next four weeks.

Use pages 5 and 6 as a reflection guide as you progress through each week and the **urine chart on page 7** to monitor your hydration levels. Keep in mind, if you exercise, your body will require more water to compensate for water loss through sweating.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
July 9 	10 	11 	12 	13 	14 	15 
16 	17 	18 	19 	20 	21 	22 
23 	24 	25 	26 	27 	28 	29 
30 	31 	August 1 	2 	3 	4 	5  End of Challenge!

DRINKING TIPS →

Use a refillable water bottle

Add chopped fruits, fruit squeezes, and herbs

Drink before every meal or snack



Brace and Drank



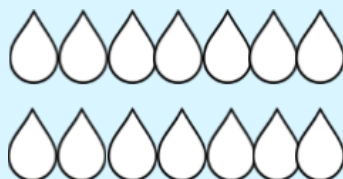
Reflection Guide

 = one 8-ounce cup of water

Week 1 (July 9th—July 15th)

Total ounces of water drank this week: _____

Note your average water intake:



Rate your energy level (1= least energetic, 5 = most energetic)

1 2 3 4 5

Note any improvements, if any, in core and back muscles:

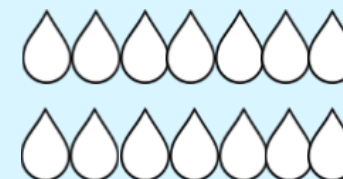
Note any other improvements in your health:

What was the easiest thing to do this week? Hardest?

Week 2 (July 16th—July 22nd)

Total ounces of water drank this week: _____

Note your average water intake:



Rate your energy level (1= least energetic, 5 = most energetic)

1 2 3 4 5

Note any improvements, if any, in core and back muscles:

Note any other improvements in your health:

What was the easiest thing to do this week? Hardest?



Brace and Drank



Reflection Guide

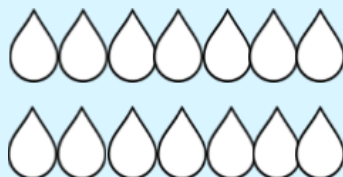


= one 8-ounce cup of water

Week 3 (July 23rd—July 29th)

Total ounces of water drank this week: _____

Note your average water intake:



Rate your energy level (1= least energetic, 5 = most energetic)

1 2 3 4 5

Note any improvements, if any, in core and back muscles:

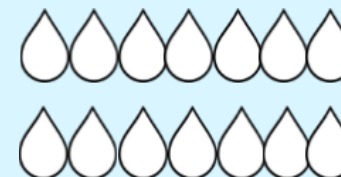
Note any other improvements in your health:

What was the easiest thing to do this week? Hardest?

Week 4 (July 30th—August 5th)

Total ounces of water drank this week: _____

Note your average water intake:



Rate your energy level (1= least energetic, 5 = most energetic)

1 2 3 4 5



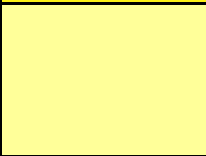

Note any improvements, if any, in core and back muscles:

Note any other improvements in your health:

What was the easiest thing to do this week? Hardest?

Urine Color Chart

This urine color chart will give you an idea of whether or not you are drinking enough water and what actions you can take to help your body achieve the ideal level of hydration.

ARE YOU DRINKING ENOUGH?	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very dehydrated • Recommended to keep drinking water
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dehydrated • Recommended to keep drinking water
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Somewhat dehydrated • Recommended to keep drinking water
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hydrated ➡ IDEAL! • Keep drinking at the same rate!
<p>Be aware! If you are taking single vitamin supplements or a multivitamin supplement, some of the vitamins in your supplement can change the color of your urine for a few hours, making it bright yellow or discolored.</p>	

If you find yourself dehydrated, be sure to increase your water intake at a slow, steady rate to avoid over hydrating.