

Indiana mom dies of 'water toxicity.' Here's what you should know about drinking water too fast

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The death of Indiana woman Ashley Summers over the July 4th weekend has sparked discussion about the dangers of water toxicity.

"Someone said she drank four bottles of water in 20 minutes. I mean, an average water bottle is like 16 ounces, so that was 64 ounces that she drank in a span of 20 minutes. That's half a gallon. That's what you're supposed to drink in a whole day," said Devon Miller, Ashley's brother, to WRTV.

Medical News Today describes water toxicity as drinking too much water too fast; although rare, the condition can be fatal. While the body obviously needs water to function, drinking too much water in a short time can lead to serious health risks, largely because the kidneys can only filter about a liter of water per hour.

According to The Washington Post, excess water can cause hyponatremia—as the increased amount of water dilutes the body's salt levels. In extreme cases, this can lead to brain swelling and progressive neurological symptoms, including confusion, disorientation, seizures, coma and even death.

Severe cases of water intoxication can produce more serious symptoms, including:

- drowsiness
- [muscle weakness](#) or cramping
- increased [blood pressure](#)
- [double vision](#)
- confusion
- inability to identify sensory information
- difficulty breathing

According to the Mayo Clinic, the U.S. National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine determined that an adequate daily fluid intake is:

- About 15.5 cups (3.7 liters) of fluids a day for men
- About 11.5 cups (2.7 liters) of fluids a day for women

"Aim to drink half an ounce for every pound of body weight," she says. "In other words, divide what you weigh in half and aim to consume that many overall ounces of [water](#) daily from a variety of sources," Wendy Bazilian, a registered doctor of public health and nutritionist told Forbes.

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