

THE COLOR OF PEE

Urine may have a variety of colors. It usually ranges from a deep amber or honey color to a light straw color, with many golden variations in between.

The color of urine can tell you a lot about your body. Here's a chart of urine colors and what they indicate:



NO COLOR. TRANSPARENT.

You're drinking a lot of water.
You may want to cut back.



PALE STRAW COLOR.

You're normal, healthy and well-hydrated.



TRANSPARENT YELLOW.

You're normal.



DARK YELLOW.

Normal. But drink some water soon.



AMBER OR HONEY.

Your body isn't getting enough water.
Drink some now.



SYRUP OR BROWN ALE.

You could have liver disease.
Or severe dehydration. Drink water and see your doctor if it persists.



PINK TO REDDISH.

Have you eaten beets, blueberries or rhubarb recently? If not, you may have blood in your urine. It could be nothing. Or it could be a sign of kidney disease, tumors, urinary tract infections, prostate problems or something else. Maybe even lead or mercury poisoning. Contact your doctor.



ORANGE.

You may not be drinking enough water.
Or you could have a liver or bile duct condition. Or it could be food dye.
Contact your doctor.



BLUE OR GREEN.

Okay, this is different. There is a rare genetic disease that can turn your urine blue or green. Also certain bacteria can infect the urinary tract. But it's probably a food dye in something you ate. Or a medication. You won't die from it, but see your doctor if it persists.



PURPLE.

There's no such thing as purple urine.

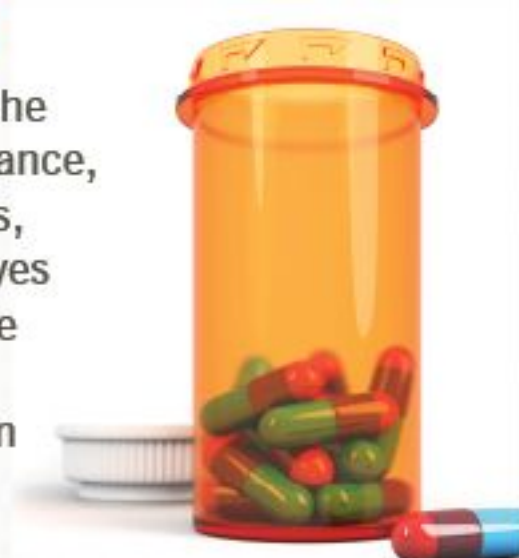


FOAMING OR FIZZING.

A harmless hydraulic effect, if occasional.
But could indicate excess protein in your diet or a kidney problem. See a doctor if foaming happens all the time.

OUTSIDE INFLUENCES:

Stuff you take can change the color of your urine. For instance, some medications, laxatives, chemotherapy drugs and dyes doctors give you to diagnose urinary tract infections can make your urine darker than normal. Are you taking any of these things?



FINAL WORD:

THE INVISIBLE WORLD OF URINE

You can tell a lot from looking at your urine. But you can tell a lot more from the kind of sophisticated urinalysis you should be getting along with a regular physical examination from your doctor. Blood in the urine, a serious sign, is often invisible to the naked eye. The level of sugars in your urine may indicate a risk for diabetes. When you're at your doctor's office, don't be afraid to pee in the cup. It's one of the best things you can do for your health.