Introduction: An adequate hydration status is essential to maintain all our physiological and cognitive functions. These functions are directly correlated to age, gender, body composition, physiological status, level of physical activity and temperature/humidity of environment.

Objective: To evaluate hydration recommendations in graphical representations of Food Based Dietary Guidelines (FBDG) worldwide through literature review.

Method: FBDG have been studied in 79 countries on 6 continents. The study includes official and non-official FBDG created by universities or scientific associations.

Results: Ten out 79 countries have not got FBDG. Ninety-seven graphical representations have been analyzed with the following distribution: Africa (4%), Near East (4%), Asia and the Pacific (13%), North America (20%), Latin America and Caribbean (22%), Europe (37%). 46.4% of them presented a pyramid format, 18.5% a circle/plate format and 32.9% presented others. 60.8% of FBDG included items related to hydration; the most frequent item was water (97%) and only 12.3% included in addition other beverages (milk, fruit juices, coffee and tea).

Conclusions: Official and non-official FBDG are not equally distributed among countries, the most common used format was pyramid model (65%). Hydration science has led some institutions to include water as an essential and necessary item in FBDG. These results show that hydration guidelines should be given greater attention in the future.

Key words: hydration, food based dietary guidelines.