

## The Importance of Water

Now here's a thing:

- 75% of people are dehydrated.
- 2.5 litres of water are lost each day through normal bodily functions.
- Symptoms of deterioration begin to appear when the body loses 5% of its total water volume.
- Even MILD dehydration will slow down one's metabolism as much as 3%
- Lack of water is the no. 1 trigger of daytime fatigue.
- Preliminary research indicates that 8-10 glasses of water a day could significantly ease back and joint pain for up to 80% of sufferers.
- A mere 2% drop in body water can trigger fuzzy short-term memory, trouble with basic math, and difficulty focusing on the computer screen or a printed page.
- A 5% drop in body fluids will cause a 25 to 30% loss of energy in most people, a 15% drop causes death!

Although we are exposed to numerous warnings on the news, in newspapers and in magazines about the importance of drinking plenty of water, many people still do not consume the recommended minimum amounts each day. However, if you consider that up to 65% of a person's body weight is water, the human brain is composed of 95% water, and that blood is composed of 82% water, the importance of consuming enough water soon becomes obvious.

Every part of the body is dependent on water. The functions of our glands and organs will eventually deteriorate if they are not nourished with good clean water. Water is an excellent solvent and assimilation of vital nutrients and proteins occurs through absorption of water. Metabolism, digestion, blood flow and cellular reproduction depend on proper water supply.

If your body isn't properly hydrated, cells will draw water from your bloodstream, which causes your heart to work harder. Meanwhile, your kidneys can't properly purify your blood, and when that happens, some of the kidneys' workload is passed along to the liver and other organs, which can cause them to be severely stressed. Additionally, you can develop a number of minor health conditions such as constipation, dry and itchy skin, acne, nosebleeds, urinary tract infection, coughs, sneezing, sinus pressure, and headaches.

## How Water Helps Your Body

The consumption of water aids in many bodily functions. Water is responsible for keeping moisture in the body, for promoting good skin health, for transporting oxygen in the blood stream, for carrying nutrients throughout the body, and for promoting optimum functioning of various organs. Aside from helping the body maintain regular functions, water can also help decrease the occurrence of certain abnormal conditions and illness.

Drinking sufficient amounts of water can reduce episodes of constipation, decrease the risk of colon cancer by up to 45%, reduce the risk of bladder cancer by up to 50%, and ease back and joint pain. Adequate water intake can also potentially reduce the risk of breast cancer, the risk of stroke, and the development of kidney and liver problems.

## **What Happens if You Skimp on Water Intake**

Lack of water in the body can lead to numerous health problems. If your internal organs are not getting enough water they are unable to properly perform their regular functions. For example, if the brain is forced to work without sufficient water for an extended period of time, impaired functioning like problems with short-term memory, trouble with basic maths, impaired neuromuscular function, decreased concentration and slowed thinking can begin to occur. Lack of water can also lead to dizziness, headaches, muscle weakness and daytime fatigue.

Lack of water intake can also lead to severe problems with other important organs like the heart (since blood flow is impaired), the kidneys (since dehydration can lead to the build up of toxins in the system), and skin (since lack of moisture can lead to conditions like eczema and psoriasis).

## **How Much Water is Enough**

In order to keep your organs functioning smoothly and to get the most benefit from water it is recommended that a person should drink 8 eight ounce glasses of water a day. Why 8 eight ounce glasses of water a day? Mostly to replace the water lost by the body during ordinary activities. The body uses two cups of water a day through the act of breathing, another two cups through visible perspiration and another six cups through elimination. This total does not take into account the water lost through exercise, hard work, dry air, or caffeine or alcohol consumption.

To determine the correct amount of water you should drink a day use these guidelines from the American Medical Association. For persons weighing 150 pounds or less the recommended water consumption is five cups a day, for every 20 pounds of body weight over 150, they recommend an additional one cup of water. For those individuals with a body weight of over 250 pounds, 12 to 13 cups of water a day is recommended.

## **Sneaky Ways to Up Your Water Intake**

So how can an individual ensure that they consume an adequate amount of water? The first option is to drink plain, non-additive tap or bottled water. Considering that a person can drink 4,000 glasses of tap water for the same cost as of a six pack of coke, this is definitely the most cost-effective way. But what if you dislike the taste of water? Then there are numerous other options. Consider adding a splash of fruit juice to your water for added flavour, or make juice ice cubes to flavour your water. You can also freeze fresh fruit and use that as ice in your water. You can also add a slice of lemon or orange to your water for a little extra kick of flavour.

Other tasty water intake alternatives include... eating fruits and vegetables that are high in water content such as lettuce and watermelon, enjoying broth-based soups at least once a day, and consuming flavoured beverages like tea and powdered drink mixes that are 100% water based.

With such a broad range of options available for water consumption, getting your recommended amount of water per day should be no problem!

And finally for those of us trying to lose those stray pounds..... by taking in enough water, your body starts dropping weight possibly 4 or 5 pounds in the first week because it optimizes your bodily functions, allowing the body to run more efficiently and start burning stored body fat for energy.