

DRINK MORE WATER!

Some nutritionists insist that 80% of the country is walking around dehydrated. We drink too much coffee, tea, and sodas containing caffeine, which prompts the body to lose water. More troubling is that fact that when we are dehydrated, we don't know what to drink. The answer is simple: **drink water!**

Water is pure liquid refreshment and accounts for a large percentage of what makes each of us "human." The average 150 lb. adult body contains 40 to 50 quarts of water. Almost 2/3rds of our body weight is "water weight":

- Blood is 83% water
- Muscles are 75% water
- Brain is 74% water
- Bone is 22% water

Water is necessary for your body to digest and absorb vitamins and nutrients. It also detoxifies the liver and kidneys, and carries away waste from the body. And when it comes to digestion . . . it's just not happening without water. Fiber alone cannot aid proper digestive function by itself. In fact, without water as its partner, good fiber goes bad, causing constipation and extreme discomfort.

If you're dehydrated, your blood is literally thicker, and your body has to work much harder to cause it to circulate. As a result, the brain becomes less active, it's hard to concentrate, your body feels fatigued, and you just "poop out."

Simple water -- when it's pure and free of contaminants -- is truly a "wonder drug." Without chemicals, additives, or anything unnatural, a steady dose of 8 glasses of water a day (ideally ½ your body weight in ounces of water) will:

- Improve your energy
- Increase your mental and physical performance
- Remove toxins and waste products from your body
- Keep skin healthy and glowing
- Help you lose weight
- Reduce headaches and dizziness
- Allow for proper digestion
- Help you to keep you more alkaline

HEART: The findings of a six-year study of more than 20,000 healthy men and women aged 38-100 in the May 1, 2002 American Journal of Epidemiology found that women who drank more than five glasses of water a day were 41% less likely to die from a heart attack during the study period than those who drank less than two glasses. The protective effect of water was even greater in men.

WEIGHT LOSS: Water is a natural appetite suppressant, so developing a good water

drinking habit can be a long-term aid in achieving and maintaining a healthy weight. Doctor F. Batmanghelidj MD, author of "Your Body's Many Cries For Water" says most times your "hunger" is your body asking for water – not food. It's also important to remember that when the body is dehydrated, fat cells get "rubbery" and cannot be easily metabolized. This means that it's harder to lose when you don't drink your water.

Water is especially important for pregnant women and nursing mothers. For athletes and work-out fanatics, drinking water reduces cardiovascular stress and improves performance. And, since water reduces body temperature, it makes the whole exercise process safer and more effective.

Water is also an important "healing tool" for people with a history of kidney stones. Since water dissolves calcium in the urine, downing at least 8 glasses daily reduces the risk of stone formation. Drinking water is also valuable in preventing urinary tract infections in both men and for women, flushing impurities out of the system.

Even mild dehydration makes you more susceptible to viruses. For someone like me, with an immune system compromised from my battle with terminal cancer, water is a powerful weapon in my war on colds and other illnesses. I've also found that water helps me recover more quickly.

When your body is hydrated, drainage from allergies and colds doesn't stick and collect in your throat and lungs, and your cough is more "productive". Even cold sores that appear on the lips are minimized by drinking water because those eruptions tend to favor dry areas on the body.

You are naturally thirsty i.e. "dehydrated" in the morning . . . help your body flush out the toxins it has been processing all night and take advantage of this thirst to get a "leg up" on your daily water requirements by drinking a glass of water first thing.

I know how hard it can be to remember to drink enough water every day, but I also know how hard it can be to bounce back from the effects of being even mildly dehydrated. So I'd like to share a few easy tips to help you reach your "water mark" every day:

- If you are cold drink warm water instead of dehydrating coffee & tea.
- Don't wait until you're thirsty to have a drink – you are already dehydrated if you feel thirsty.
- Set a timer to remind yourself to establish a habit of drinking water and keep a bottle of water with you at all times.
- Compensate for diuretics . . . thieves that steal water from your body. If you drink coffee, tea, or sodas with caffeine, you'll need to drink a few extra glasses of water to make up for the water that these diuretic beverages "leech" from your system.