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Water

Water is absolutely essential for the maintenance of optimum health and efficiency in all the body's system. For example, nerves do not transmit messages efficiently if they are not properly hydrated, sufficient acid and digestive enzymes are not secreted into the intestinal tract to break down food, hormone secretion is hindered.

If the circulation is lacking in volume, it does not deliver oxygen, nutrients and other essential substances to the tissues effectively. Poor circulation to the kidneys means that toxins are less readily removed from the system. Dehydration jeopardizes all of the most basic processes and systems in the body.

It doesn't take much fluid loss from the body for it to impact on our well-being. There is evidence that as little as 1% dehydration (about 500 mls of fluid for 70 kg adult) can impair the body's physiological and biochemical processes. In the short, even mild dehydration can provoke problems with diverse array of symptoms including headache, fatigue, loss of appetite, heat intolerance, light-headedness and dry mouth and eyes.

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 and your body feels fatigued.

Water helps our gut work more efficiently, helping prevent constipation, irritable bowel syndrome, & many other related diseases.

Water hydrates your skin. Drinking enough water can combat skin disorders such as eczema, psoriasis, dry skin, wrinkles & spots.

How much water do we need?

Each day an adult loses the equivalent of about 4 per cent of body weight in water. For a 70kg person this equates to approximately 2,500 to 3000 mls. This means, that we need to consume between 1.5 and 2 litres of water per day. This can be fine-tuned according to weight. For average day-to-day needs, we should aim to consume 30 mls of water for each kilogramme of our body weight.

Drinking Water and 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.

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.

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Tips for Drinking Water

It can be to remember to drink enough water every day. Here are a few easy tips to help you reach your 'water mark' every day:

- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- Add lemon; to tone your kidneys.
- Add lime to tone your liver.
- Try water hot, maybe with freshly sliced ginger, for a refreshing drink that improves your circulation.
- The closer to body temperature water is, the easier your body takes it where it needs to go. Very cold water can over-stimulate the kidneys.
- Try different bottled or filtered waters until you find one you like. Drink at least an extra pint if it is hot or you are doing physical work or exercise.

- Spread your water intake out throughout the day & drink most of your quota before 6p.m.
- Drinking a mug of hot water with lemon before breakfast to help cleanse your system. This counts towards your daily requirement.
- Every time you put the kettle on or someone offers you a drink, ask for hot water or a herbal tea.
- If you drink a glass of water half an hour before every meal it dampens your appetite, & helps prevent you drinking with your meal which can decrease absorption of nutrients.

Quality

All tap water that is to be consumed should be treated to remove such contaminants as pesticides, nitrates and nitrites, heavy metals and metallo-organic compounds of heavy metals, chlorine from the Water Company's treatment plant, organo-chlorine compounds which come from the chlorine treatment of water, PCBs, fluoride, aluminium etc. This can be achieved (to a point) with a jug filter, though the efficacy of this is limited and it is important to change the filter cartridge regularly. Alternatively, bottled mineral water is recommended. Please ensure you drink (this can include the herbal teas) at least 1.5 ltrs of water per day.