



## Options Center Nutrition Topic



### **Water: The Most Important Nutrient**

You spent the entire afternoon cleaning your house, as well as mowing and raking the yard. There's a slight breeze, but you're hot, tired, and need something to cool yourself off--something fast, before the kids get home from school. The refrigerator reveals a vast assortment of soda, some fruit juice, milk, and beer. Hesitating, you wonder which will quench your thirst, completely ignoring the best liquid for the job--a tall, cool glass of water.

When deciding what to drink most people choose other beverages over water. Water is easily available, but it just doesn't have the pizzazz other beverages do. It's easy to quickly disregard water, but take a minute and consider what an injustice you're doing to your body.

Water is the second most important life-sustaining property of the body, the first being air. It is used in virtually every body function. The body can survive without water if some type of liquid is consumed daily. But to function at its peak, the body needs water and more than just a gulp to swallow a daily vitamin or two aspirins.

#### **Water Is Necessary for Life.**

Water makes up a large percentage of our bodies. Our brain is 75% water, our muscles are about 75% water, our kidneys are 82% water, and our blood is 83% water. Water is so important to our bodies that a mere loss of 10-20% can be fatal. Even slight dehydration can cause fatigue and a decrease in mental alertness and reasoning skills. Even if your mouth is not dry, you still may need to take a drink.

There is a delayed reaction between your brain and mouth when slight dehydration is experienced, so you may not even realize you are becoming dehydrated until you feel thirsty. You may notice that during the day you experience thirst more than hunger. This is because food is processed by the body more slowly than water. Your body needs to be constantly replenished with pure water throughout the day.

Most people don't realize they are not getting the amount of water they need. To find out what you need, take your body weight and divide by 3. The resulting number is the number of ounces you need to drink in one day. If you are sick, under stress, or are in contact with electrical appliances such as computers, copy machines, etc. then you need to increase your intake of water. The average body can process *up to 5 gallons* of water a day, so usually there is no way to get too much water.

#### **Pure Water**

Drinking pure water may seem like the easiest thing to do, but most water is contaminated to some extent. Contaminants range from excess minerals such as calcium, sodium, and magnesium to toxic metals such as lead and copper to

bacteria, parasites, cleaning solvents, pesticides, and herbicides, some of which are carcinogenic.

These contaminants can cause a vast array of health problems including:

- heart disease and high blood pressure (from high levels of sodium),
- fatigue (from high levels of calcium),
- nervous disorders & learning disabilities (from high levels of lead or copper),
- diarrhea or flu-like symptoms (from bacteria and parasites),
- cancer (from cleaning solvents, herbicides, pesticides, etc.)

Tap water contains many minerals that may disrupt the progress you are making with your supplements and diet. Tap water usually contains high amounts of calcium, magnesium, copper, lead, and some heavy metals. For example, *reverse osmosis filters* take out these unwanted levels of minerals.

Drinking pure water (and lots of it!) can dramatically change how you feel. Being hydrated helps the body flush out more toxins and aids in detoxification.

### **Tips for Drinking Water**

Here are some tips to acquire a healthy habit of drinking water.

- Fill a 2-quart pitcher with purified water. Constantly keep refilling your glass. If the pitcher is empty at the end of the day, you have consumed approximately 64 ounces.
- Start drinking water on a schedule. Drink one glass every two hours. It will soon become a habit to automatically drink eight glasses. Try drinking water throughout the day, instead of large amounts at one time.
- Your intake of water is the same when seasons change. Your body needs the same amount throughout the year.
- If the purified water seems unappetizing, add fresh lemon juice or lemon slices.

Sources: [webmd.com](http://webmd.com)

[www.reference.com](http://www.reference.com)

### **Options Also Offers**

- A free water test from your sample that gives parts per million dissolved solids.

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