

Water as a Nutrient

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Water is a vitally needed nutrient to the body. It is second only to oxygen in our body's priority of needs; our bodies being composed of 70% water.

Water plays a dominant role in all physiological functioning in the body. It is essential for digestion, nutrient absorption and elimination. Water aids in circulation, helps control the body's temperature, lubricates and cushions joints, playing an important role in supporting the weight of the body. Water helps keep the skin healthy and is critical in removal of toxins.

Water is best when consumed at the rate of a minimum of 1/2 ounce of water per pound of body weight per day. For example, if you weigh 130 pounds, you should drink 65 ounces of water which is eight 8 oz. glasses. More is needed if you are active in outdoor and physical work or living in dry, high altitude climates such as Telluride. Pure water is your best choice. Any other beverages, including herbal teas, are processed by your body as a food and do not provide the hydration that plain old water does. Although liquids, coffee, tea and alcohol dehydrate the body by their chemical makeup and in the body's processing of these beverages.

It has been said that for every glass or cup of a dehydrating beverage, three glasses of water are needed to make up for it.

Chronic dehydration can be the underlying cause of many ailments including asthma, indigestion, high blood pressure, joint aches and pains, fatigue and depression. One well known book addressing the importance of water is Dr. Batmanghelidj's "Your Body's Many Cries for Water". Dr. Batmanghelidj was an Iranian doctor held in prison for his political views. When his jailers decided he might be of better service to them alive than dead, he was given the task of doctoring his fellow inmates. The only medication he was allowed to give was water. Dr. B learned first hand how many symptoms had dehydration as their underlying cause. His personal mission now is to spread the word of the healing that water provides. I highly recommend his book and a visit to his website www.watercure.com.

One sign of a dehydrated body is Asthma. The lungs have the greatest area of exchange of water to air. If dehydrated, the body's response is to close down the tissue lining of the lung so as to retain as much water as it can. I always recommend to my clients that they consume a glass of room temperature water before reaching for the inhaler. The inhaler is often then not necessary. There are a large number of kids on the playing fields with an inhaler in their pocket.

My nephew was one of them. Now that he consumes water (not soda) on a regular basis, he no longer needs nor uses an inhaler.

It is often said to let thirst be your guide. Many people, however, lose their thirst

perception. This happens with age and with repeatedly ignoring the body's request for water. Our older generation suffers tremendously from dehydration. I recommend to my clients that they build up to the amount needed for their body and to do so for thirty days - whether they are thirsty or not. This serves to reawaken the thirst mechanism.

The best pattern for drinking water is to drink the majority of it in between meals. This serves to plump up the digestive tract and facilitate digestion. Sip small amounts with your meal to aid in chewing and swallowing. If large amounts of liquid are consumed with a meal (ie: Big Gulp glasses), then digestive enzymes are diluted and indigestion results. I have seen digestion issues resolve themselves and little purple pills abandoned as my clients follow my recommendations for water consumption.

Lastly, the water in our bodies is salty like that of the ocean. Salt plays a critical role in how water is held on to and moved through our bodies. Tune in next week to be awakened to the healing available with a good sea salt in your diet.