

## **The Importance of Water**

The information below is “general information only” and extracted from a talk I gave during 2005.

I am sure most of you drink plenty of fluids: coffee, fizzy drinks, tea and juice but how many of you drink enough water? Did you know that coffee, tea and fizzies all contain caffeine, which is a known diuretic and will actually accentuate the symptoms of fluid loss. Fruit juices are more concentrated in sugar than your body's fluids and so the body will attempt to dilute them in the gut thereby causing a loss of water from other areas of the body.

What kinds of symptoms result from drinking too little water?

Constipation  
Dry and itchy skin, acne  
Nose bleeds  
Repeated urinary tract infections  
Dry coughs  
Sneezing and sinus pressure  
Headaches and even depression.

In essence - water is required by every cell in the body as nourishment and to remove waste products and toxins.

### **What are the benefits of drinking water?**

**It suppresses the appetite naturally and helps the body metabolise stored fat**  
Studies have shown that a decrease in water intake will cause fat deposit to increase, while an increase in water intake can actually reduce fat deposits.

### **Defence against Disease**

When water becomes scarce, the body tries to limit the amount it loses through breathing, mucous production, urination, perspiration and bowel movements.

Several cups of water are lost daily through breathing because the lungs require humid air to do their work. The body has to moisturise the air before it reaches the lungs and does so through the mucous membranes lining the nasal passages and the bronchi. As available fluid decreases, the mucous lining becomes drier. This in turn irritates the lungs, causing them to react to dust, cigarette smoke and other irritants, and less resistant to viruses and bacteria. The same applies to the mucous lining in the sinus passages. Through lack of water, sinusitis, nosebleeds and allergies symptoms worsen.

When fluid volume is diminished, the ability of the body to remove toxins through urination is also diminished. It is a common misunderstanding that the more water we drink, the harder it is on the kidneys. In fact, except for people with some uncommon kidney problems, the opposite is true. Water-soluble toxins cannot be easily removed through the bowels, especially when lack of water also causes constipation. These toxins then must be eliminated in other ways such as through the skin. The increase in body toxin levels can cause headaches and fatigue. The

attempt by the body to remove excess levels of unwanted chemicals through the skin can cause acne and will aggravate eczema.

### **Metabolism**

The kidneys can't function properly without enough water. When they don't work to capacity, some of their load is dumped onto the liver. One of the liver's primary functions is to metabolise stored fat into usable energy for the body. But, if the liver has to do some of the kidney's work, it can't operate a full throttle. As a result, it metabolises less fat, more fat remains stored in the body and weight loss stops.

### **Fluid Retention**

Drinking enough water is the best treatment for fluid retention. When the body gets less water, it perceives this as a threat to survival and begins to hold onto every drop. Water is stored in extra-cellular spaces outside the cells. This shows up as swollen feet, legs and hands. The best way to overcome the problem of water retention is to give the body what it needs- plenty of water, only then will stored water be released.

The overweight person needs more water than the thin one as larger people have larger metabolic loads.

### **Muscle Tone**

Water helps to maintain proper muscle tone by giving muscles their natural ability to contract and by preventing dehydration. This also helps to prevent the sagging skin that usually follows weight loss. Shrinking cells are buoyed by water, which plumps the skin and leaves it clear, healthy and resilient.

### **Waste**

Water helps rid the body of waste. During weight loss, the body has a lot more waste to get rid of. All that metabolised fat must be shed. Again, adequate water helps to flush out waste, through the kidneys as urine and liver and digestive system's faeces.

### **Constipation**

Water can relieve constipation. When the body gets too little water, it siphons what it needs from internal forces. The colon is one primary source. Result? Constipation or worse, IBS. These problems increase the risk of other long-term disease including haemorrhoids and colon cancer. When a person drinks enough water, normal bowel function usually returns.

### **How Much?**

So how much water is enough? On the average a person should drink at least 1.5 litres per day – this equates to approximately 8-10 large tumblers of water. The overweight person, those regularly taking part in sports training need more and also during hot weather.

### **Can I mix water with anything?**

Herbal teas and diluted fruit juices or vegetable juices (1/3 fruit juice to 2/3 water) can be substituted for some of the water. Drink one extra glass of water for each cup of coffee or black tea you have.