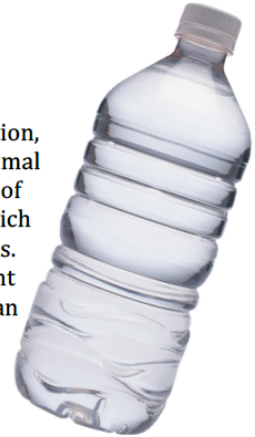


INCREASED WATER INTAKE



WHY?

Dehydration, however mild, can negatively affect the body's ability to regulate temperature, digestion, kidney function and mental processing, while contributing to chronic disease, headaches, etc. Optimal levels of water in the body are critical to our metabolism – the system which keeps a strict margin of balances throughout the human body. Our bodies need water molecules to complete reactions which are essential to the smooth running of a huge number of processes contributing to life and wellness. Increasing your intake of water is important for supporting this constant physiological requirement – especially in North America where we tend to consume less water-filled fruits and vegetables than most global regions, and intake high volumes of diuretics daily (teas and coffee). Increased water intake will help relieve constipation, reduce bloating, suppress the appetite in a healthy way, detoxify the body, aid liver and kidney function, clarify and tone the skin, and much more.

HOW?

1. Take an estimate of your usual daily water consumption (not including juices, coffees, etc.). It may help to imagine the glass/bottle you usually drink from and recall how many times you refill it / day.
2. Establish the goal to increase your intake of water weekly by 1 cup / bottle. i.e. if you normally consume 3 glasses (2 refills) a day, set the goal to drink 4 glasses a day. The week after, try to consciously consume one more glass per day, every day of that week.
3. Set final goals to reach: Assess your overall fluid intake (*including* juices, coffees, teas, etc.) and calculate how many 8-oz glasses of these you already drink/day. Females subtract this number from 9 and males from 12.5 (women should be consuming a total of 9 glasses of general fluids/day, and males 12.5 glasses). The number you have left over is how many 8-oz glasses of water you should be consuming for optimal health. Raise your number each week until arriving at your goal.
4. Be disciplined in this goal. Some tips:
 - ❖ post reminder notes above the faucet in your kitchen or workplace: "5 cups per day this week!"
 - ❖ keep a running tally at your table or desk to keep track
 - ❖ try to consume at least 2 glasses of your weekly intake first thing in the morning

HOW IT WORKS:

When the body is dehydrated, water moves outside the cells, resulting in swelling and bloating. Since the body requires water for optimal functioning at practically every level, ensuring there is a constant, sufficient amount within is key. When the kidney has enough water to work optimally, the liver and other important organs need not 'pick up the slack' and can instead work on performing their primary tasks optimally as well.

WHEN?

- A good amount first thing in the morning (as your body has essentially been 'fasting' all night)
- Drinking PRIOR to meals is best (both to optimize digestion and form an awareness of thirst as separate from hunger)
- During and post exercise and/or significant sweating

*NB:

- On days where exercise, sweating, mental concentration and focused work is increased, up your water intake that day by 10% of your weight (in ounces) / hour of work performed.
- Decreasing your consumption of tea/coffee will further maximize the health benefits of this exercise.
- Drinking too much water (well beyond the numbers here specified) may cause 'water intoxication' – a rare condition in which water consumption is not properly balanced with electrolyte and nutrient intake such that required nutrients are overly diluted

* References:

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