

The Importance of Water

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Lori L'Ecuyer
Fitness & Nutrition Consultant
Sullivan Benefits

We know, we know! You are sick of hearing about it, but water is one of the most neglected aspects of our diet!

What's the H2O Hype?

Without water, we become dehydrated. Dehydration is lack of fluids in the body. This can lead to disturbances in brain function such as concentration and thinking ability. In addition, physical dehydration may also decrease stamina and work productivity through headaches, lethargy, weakness, and even seizures. In the long term, dehydration causes urinary tract infections and kidney stones.

Weight Loss? What?

Believe it or not, successful weight loss success depends upon adequate hydration. Ignoring the need for hydration leads to over eating and chronic dehydration is linked to obesity. Staying hydrated also suppresses your appetite and blunts cravings!

Did You Know?

Seventy-five percent of your body is made of water, with the bulk stored in your largest organ...the skin! And, lean muscle mass is predominately water! When muscles are full, you look toned and increase your body's ability to burn fat!

Exercise Performance & Dehydration

A lack of water during your work out has an adverse effect on many bodily functions!

- Reduction in blood volume
- Decreased skin blood flow
- Decreased sweat rate
- Decreased heat dissipation
- Increased core temperature
- Increased rate of muscle glycogen use

It's the TOPS!

Water is by far the #1 nutrient in our diet. Studies have suggested that proper hydration may lower our risk of heart disease and cancer. Although it is well known that water is essential for human survival, only recently have we begun to understand its role in the maintenance of brain function. Since our brain is

75% water, it makes sense that when we are dehydrated, our brain actually shrinks! Even mild dehydration, caused by light exercising on a hot day, has been shown to change brain function. Athletic performance is impaired when an individual is dehydrated by as little as 2% bodyweight. Dehydration in excess of 5% of bodyweight can decrease work capacity by 30%!

Brrrrr!

Water absorption actually happens very rapidly, within 5 minutes from mouth to bloodstream, peaking around minute 20. Believe it or not, the temperature of the water appears to matter in the process! Which do you think is absorbed more rapidly, cold water or warm, body temperature water? Cold water wins! Drinking cold water raises your metabolism by 30%. This happens because your body has to work harder to raise the temperature of water to match your body.

How Much?

The current intake "recommendation" for the average person is half of your body weight calculated in ounces or approximately 8 – 10 glasses per day. However, that amount varies based upon a person's body weight, exercise level, water-rich food consumption (such as fruits and vegetables), caffeine intake, muscle mass, exercise levels, as well as many other factors. A good indicator of adequate intake is your urine. It should look like water that has had a lemon squeezed into it! Any darker and you need more water!

Fill the Tank?

How can you tell if you are dehydrated? Ask your body! If you chugged down some water and then turned around and peed it all right out, presumably that was your body's way of saying, "I'm good—all topped off!" However, if you recently guzzled and your body retained most of it, then presumably your tank was low.

So, what are you waiting for? DRINK UP!

Contact [Sullivan Benefits](#) for assistance with educating your employees and family members about exercise and fitness.

Congratulations, just taking the time to read this article is a positive step toward introducing wellness and the benefits available from a healthier lifestyle. Thank you for your time and THINK WELLNESS!