

Water, Water Everywhere...

But Often We Forget to Drink!

Eunice Farmilant

Last fall, I received a call from my 89-year-old mother's retirement home, saying she had just collapsed and was being taken to the hospital, having fainted after her morning exercise class. Although paramedics had determined she had no signs of a stroke, the hospital planned to run a series of tests to determine the cause.

It was concluded that my mother had a bladder infection and was slightly dehydrated. My mother (like millions of other people both old and young) simply doesn't drink enough water. Fainting and disorientation can occur with both urinary-tract infections and dehydration, both of which happen more frequently with the elderly. After this episode, she embarked on a new regime, which included drinking a lot more water and taking Vitamin C. She knows that tea, coffee, and soft drinks are diuretics (increase urination) so she has given these up.

As we grow older, we lose our perception of thirst and thus we don't drink enough. Another frequent mistake is, when we get a little tired, we confuse the need for water with that of food. Instead of just reaching for some water, we commonly reach for a snack, or a flavored beverage such as a sports drink.

For the average non-athlete, guzzling down a bottle of sports drink can add about 32 grams of carbohydrates and 125 calories,

with the added bonuses of flavoring, coloring agents, and artificial sweeteners. A similar amount of water would rehydrate the body just as well. Most bottled drinks average about \$1.20 per 20-ounce plastic bottle.

Plastic bottles, by the way, are really piling up. The craze for fancy water and sports drinks comes with a high price tag for our planet. It is estimated that 38 billion of them went into landfills in 2006, and some 1.5 million barrels of oil were consumed in the process of making them! Most hard-plastic bottles use Bisphenol A (BPA), a component that adds stiffness in polycarbonate products. We are only now learning about the health hazards of BPA, which is also used to line containers of liquids like soy milk, fruit-juice, and canned goods. These leach tiny amounts of BPA, a known hormone disrupter, which has been found to cause tumors in amounts as small as several parts per billion.

Tap water can be had for a fraction of a penny. If you add a solid-block carbon filter to your kitchen faucet, you will increase the cost of a gallon of water to about ten cents per gallon. The equivalent amount of fluid in bottled drinks costs at least ten dollars, or a hundred times what purified and filtered tap water costs.



Water is not just a solvent—it regulates all functions in the body, including those of solid matter, such as our organs. Water is what energizes and activates our solid matter (which is 70% water anyway) and proper hydration can quickly boost energy levels.

One problem is that a lot of people don't drink water because they find the taste unappealing. If you find your tap water too contaminated with chlorine and other chemicals, you may want to invest in a good filter instead of buying water. Considering the risks involved with plastic, isn't it worth avoiding a material that contributes so much waste? Also, freshly filtered water poured into glass really tastes great! If it's still bland for you, try adding a squirt or two of fresh lemon.

I learned about the power of water in the amazing book, *Your Body's Many Cries for Water*, by the late Dr. F. Batmanghelidj. (See www.watercure.com.) According to Dr. B., chronic

dehydration is not only widespread among much of the world, it is also the origin of most pain and degenerative disease. He claims that a dry mouth is not a good way to judge dehydration and waiting to get thirsty is wrong. Thirst should be prevented. Pain is actually a sign of dehydration and an indication that the body is in a state of crisis.

Dr. B. attributes such conditions as asthma, allergies, lupus, and heartburn to the lack of water. Heartburn, for instance, can be prevented by drinking a glass of water half an hour before meals. This allows for the water to be properly absorbed by both the stomach and the intestines, priming the mucus membranes to receive food. Major pains in the body, such as joint pain, migraine headaches, and even fibromyalgic pain, have a simple explanation. He says that, "Toxic, chemical waste builds up when you don't drink enough water." When the waste isn't eliminated, the affected areas become acidic. Acid affects the nerve endings, which in turn relay a message to the brain, perceived as pain. Drinking water allows the kidneys and liver to flush away toxics, thus normalizing acidic body pH, and diminishing pain. Also, toxins are more easily released as gas through exhalation when the lungs are moist.

How Much Water Is Enough?

About a quart-and-a-half of urine is produced and released

daily, and amazingly, we lose another quart just through breathing! Lungs dry out very quickly when there isn't enough fresh water to replace what is lost through breathing, and the body begins a process of shutting down. During winter, when we are house-bound and heated air

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When you drink also is important. Upon arising, it's a good idea to replace fluids lost from breathing and sweating during the night. A few glasses before breakfast helps to recharge the body. Adding lemon to the morning drink is tasty, alkalizing, and helps flush the body. I have also followed Dr. B's suggestion of drinking a glass of water half an hour before meals. It does seem to improve my digestion! ■

Eunice Farmilant is a health practitioner in Plains, Montana, and is soon to be opening her Fire Mountain Spa. She is an independent distributor for Multi-Pure® water purification systems, which she recommends highly. Contact Eunice at 826-3005, or by e-mail at farmilant@blackfoot.net.

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