

Wellness Journey to Health: The importance of hydration

A few weeks ago, I was surprised to learn that some individuals do not drink any water during the day. Zip, nul, none, rien! "Why" I asked? While some reported that they weren't thirsty, others told me that they didn't want to drink too much to avoid having to go the washroom. I completely understand this challenge especially for those who are in a wheelchair.



Linda Houle-Robert

Are you drinking enough water?

A normal adult is 60 to 70 percent water. We can go without food for almost two months, but without water only a few days. Did you know that brain tissue is said to consist of 86% water? Because most of our body's functions rely so much on water, the general rule is to drink at least eight glasses of water a day.

What are the signs of dehydration?

It has become a practice to regard a "dry mouth" as a signal of body water needs, which is further assumed to be well-regulated if the sensation of "dry mouth" is not present. Can you

believe that a dry mouth is actually the last outward sign of extreme dehydration? Because of a gradually failing thirst sensation, the body becomes chronically and increasingly dehydrated. Common signals of dehydration can include any of the following symptoms: heartburn, stomach ache, constipation, low back pain, headache, mental irritation and depression.

But I drink coffee or soda pop – isn't this water?

While these beverages contain water, they are actually dehydrating fluids. Not only do they eliminate the water contained in them, but they also cause you to lose further amounts of water from your body's reserves!

How could I increase my level of water without drinking my eight glasses?

Try eating water rich foods, such as watermelon, which is 92% water by weight (see yummy recipe). Other fruits with a high percentage of water include tomatoes, peaches, pineapple, strawberries and oranges. As for vegetables, cucumbers, celery, carrots, squash and bell peppers are my favourites. These can be easily added to existing meals, such as pastas and with meats. Cranberry juice, herbal teas and soup broths are other options.

Watermelon Summer Drink

1 to 2 cups seedless watermelon chunks
1 cup ice cubes
1 tbsps fresh mint leaves

Blend up the fresh watermelon and mint with the ice cubes. Do not over-blend. This is one of the most refreshing drinks, especially for the summertime.

Watermelon Smoothie

2 cups seeded watermelon chunks

1 cups crushed or cracked ice

1/2 cup plain yogurt

1/2 tsp. ginger

1/8 tsp. almond extract (optional)

Whip ingredients together and blend until smooth. Serve immediately. Makes 2-3 servings.

"To eat is a necessity, but to eat intelligently is an art" La Rochefoucauld

The information and guidance provided is not intended to replace a one-on-one relationship with a qualified health care professional and is not intended as medical advice. You are advised to make your own health care decisions based upon your research and in partnership with a qualified health care professional.

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