

Diet: Drink water – Lose Weight

Open any magazine about diet and healthy lifestyles and you are almost bound to see an article advising you to drink more water. Most of us know that we need to drink around 8 large glasses of water everyday but few of us do. And when we do make an effort to increase the volume of water we consume, most of us give up fairly quickly. But we should stick with it and we should make sure we are keeping our bodies well hydrated by drinking enough water, because the benefits are amazing.

Why do we need to drink so much water?

Given that our bodies are composed of about 70% water, it stands to reason that we need an adequate daily supply of fresh water in order to keep our bodies functioning properly. There are numerous ways our bodies benefit from consuming the recommended daily amount of water. These include:-

- The digestion, absorption and assimilation of food requires a sufficient water supply. Without it you won't get the full benefit of the nutrients in the food that you eat
- Water aids the excretion of waste from both the bowel and kidneys and without an adequate water supply you will get constipated and put your kidneys under stress
- Your skin uses an evaporation process in order to keep you cool and regulate body temperature. You need to consume enough water to keep this system working efficiently
- Your blood is around 90% water and as this your body's transport system for transporting oxygen and distributing nutrients around the body, it is vital that it is kept adequately hydrated so that it can be pumped around your body efficiently
- Body secretions and digestive juices are almost entirely water
- Drinking a sufficient amount of water can improve the appearance of your skin – impurities are flushed away leaving you with a much clearer complexion and saggy skin can be smoothed out to some extent when skin cells are properly hydrated
- Muscle tone improves as muscles contract more efficiently if they have an adequate water supply, thus making your work out more effective
- Drinking an adequate supply of water can help alleviate headaches. Headaches are a very common sign of dehydration. The human brain is 75% water so even being slightly dehydrated can cause headaches
- One of water's main functions is to flush toxins from the body. Without a sufficient water supply, your body cannot get rid of all the toxins which can result in feeling fatigued as your body diverts energy to try and rid itself of all of the toxins. This can also lead to poor concentration

How does drinking water assist in weight loss?

Water is a natural appetite suppressant so drinking plenty of water may indeed reduce your appetite. Water contains no calories, fat, or cholesterol and is low in sodium. Not drinking enough water can also lead to over eating. It is very easy to confuse the feelings of being hungry and the feelings of being thirsty as your brain does not differentiate between them. So when you think you are feeling hungry, you may in fact be thirsty leading to you eating something when all you actually needed was a drink.

Furthermore, one of the liver's main functions is to metabolize fat into energy. If, however, your kidneys are not working properly because they are not being adequately hydrated, then your liver will step in to help thus lowering it's total productivity. As the liver can't, in this situation, metabolize fat as quickly or as efficiently as it could if it were not having to help out the kidneys, you are laying yourself open to storing fat.

Some people also notice that when they start to increase their water consumption, they start to lose centimeters. This is due to the fact that our bodies have developed survival mechanisms whereby if your body does not receive enough water, your body will go into survival mode, storing some of the water that it does receive. Once you start to hydrate your body properly, your body no longer needs these stores and as stored water is bulky, loss of the stored water can result in loss of centimeters. This can also cause a real problem when you first increase the amount of water that you consume – it takes time for your body to adjust to the fact that it is receiving adequate water and so at first, it may seem that you are always rushing to the nearest toilet but eventually your body does adjust and so normality resumes.

Water consumption can also be increased by eating water dense fruits and vegetables such as melon and lettuce. Indeed, the results of two long-term Penn State University studies showed that eating a healthy, low-fat, low-energy-density diet can result in more weight loss than eating a more energy-dense diet. Low-energy-dense water-rich foods included fruits and vegetables. One of the studies observed the diet patterns of 7500 men and women. The other study followed 101 obese women. Although the participants on the low-fat, low-energy diet ate a greater weight of foods, their calorie consumption was less.