



DR WAVE

## Water is life

By Dr. Wendy Arnold, M.D.

It's common knowledge that our bodies are more than 50% water. Ironically, most people don't drink enough water on a daily basis. Every function in our body needs water, so when we are depleted, our ability to think, focus and perform declines. This problem affects not only athletes, but also the less active person sitting behind a desk. Most people should drink 3L of water daily, just to maintain bodily functions. That amount will vary based on an individual's body habitus, temperature and activity. Some of the critical physiologic tasks requiring water include: transporting, lubricating, catalyzing, and regulating temperature. Although we get thirsty when we are low on water, there is often a significant lag in that signal. What's worse is that sometimes we feel hungry first, when we are actually dehydrated.

Here are some tips to help you drink more water.

1. Start your day with a glass of water. Our bodies experience insensible losses while sleeping. Replete that first thing and your energy and focus will improve.
2. Be accountable. Share the endeavor with a buddy and check-in throughout the day. Free apps are available that help you track water intake like MyFitnessPal. Search the app store for water trackers and you'll find fun apps like Plant Nanny that give you a visual of your progress.
3. Drink one to two glasses with every meal.
4. Make it palatable. Our taste buds are extremely sensitive and many people don't like the taste of water. Try these tips to make it taste more appealing, and therefore it becomes less effort.
  - Try carbonated water. I have a Soda Stream with a CO2 canister so that I can make my own. It tastes and feels different because of the bubbles and carbonic acid, which acts like a squeeze of citrus.
  - Add flavor. I prefer essential oils that are edible. My go to is lemon and it only takes 2-3 drops for 16 ounces. Some people add a splash of apple cider vinegar.

—Try alkaline water, it's the best tasting water in it's natural state to me. I live close to the alkaline spring in Carlsbad, CA, so I can get it in 5 gallon containers. Don't stress about drinking acid or base because your kidneys manage your body's pH no matter what you ingest, plus they will thank you for the water!

— Drink it at the temperature that most appeals to you. My husband piles his bottle with ice. I like room temperature, or even heated with a slice of lemon.

5. Minimize beverages that dehydrate you. Caffeine and alcohol both act as diuretics which signal your kidneys to dump extra water. When our kidneys are signaled to dump water from an artificial stimulus (like caffeine) we become unnecessarily dehydrated.

6. Have access. Having it on hand makes the habit that much easier. Keep a bottle on your desk in between meals. Remember, out of sight, out of mind.

7. Sip gradually throughout the day rather than pound it down. It's better absorbed and you feel less bloated.

Drinking the appropriate amount of water makes us look, feel and function at optimal levels. I hope these tips help you stay hydrated and healthy!

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