

Water, water!

Water is my favorite drink. I decided that this month's Health Note would be about that all-important liquid we call H₂O.

One of the biggest names in massage therapy research, Thomas Myers, wrote the following in *Massage & Bodywork Magazine*, 2005: The fertilized ovum... is about 98 percent water. The neonate that slips through the birth canal ... is still 90 percent water. You are, like the surface of the earth, around 72 percent water. Muscle tissue is 75 percent water, 20 percent protein, and 5 percent salt, sugar, and fat. Nervous and epithelial tissues are even more aqueous. Connective tissue is the variable one -- 95 percent water in blood, but only a few percent in the density of cartilage and bone.

Myers says adults are 72 percent water. Other writers have said 60-70 percent. Regardless, it's a huge number and worth thinking about!

What exactly does the body use water for? It carries oxygen to all the cells, thereby ensuring their proper functioning. Water keeps the components in our blood in proper proportions and helps the blood flow smoothly to all organs. The kidneys use a lot of water to dissolve uric acid, lactic acid and urea so that they can be flushed from the body during urination. If body fluid levels are low, the kidneys have to work that much harder. In fact, logic would tell us that low fluid levels would cause every body system to work in a stressed state. We also need to keep our internal body temperature regulated and water does just that. It lubricates our mucus membranes and lungs, as well as our joints. (Next time your joints are feeling a little achy, try increasing your fluid intake and see if that helps). Water helps in the metabolism of fat molecules. If we are low in fluid levels, the body will retain water--so think about drinking more if you're trying to lose a bit of weight! We also lose a lot of water through perspiration and exhalation.

Is all water we drink the same? Tap water is purified many times by the city, but has types of fluoride & chlorine in it to kill germs. Many people prefer filtration systems hooked up to the faucet or from a pitcher. Many of the popular bottled waters are tap water purified. There are new vitamin waters in the stores, now, and sports drinks with electrolytes. Check the labels to be sure they don't also include sugar. Where you get your water from is a matter of personal preference. And think, too, of where your bottled water is coming from and the impact you are having on the earth by bringing it into your home. A lot of pollution is added to the planet transporting bottled or designer water from thousands of miles away.

A lot of our required water intake can be gotten from our foods. The best sources are fruits, vegetables, teas, coffee, juices. But the best source is a glass of plain water!

Have you been feeling headachy in this heat? Try drinking 1-2 cups of water before popping an aspirin. You might simply be dehydrated.

As for the skin, the best way to care for your largest organ is lubrication from the inside out. That means flushing it with lots of water. If you have healthy skin, everyone notices! If you're concerned about aging skin, drinking water will help you stay younger longer.

Lastly, no discussion of water can leave out mention of an author you all have heard of, I'm sure: Masaru Emoto. He is the author of "The Hidden Messages in Water" and "The True Power of Water", among other titles. If you haven't already read his books, I strongly encourage you to check them out of the library for your summer reading! He has done amazing research with water crystals, and how we can influence water with just our thoughts, words, or music. Next time you raise a glass, say "Thank You" to the water, then drink it in!

Have a happy & healthy month. I will see you all soon!

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