

Self Examination: Water Consumption

One of the first steps in a Holistic health process should be to examine and adjust the intake of water till it reaches a proper level in the human body.

Why?

Many chronic illnesses are exacerbated if not wholly caused by chronic dehydration. It is also the case for the relatively healthy that for the optimum health and function of every muscle, nerve, and organ in the body -- they are like plants and need enough water.

The human body, especially in our culture, lives in a state of chronic dehydration, constantly shunting water from one "must have" spot to another in a losing game of trying to keep the most important functions running well enough to survive.

By gently and over time bringing your water intake up to proper levels, you will increase your body's ability to function in every way, every organ, every organic system - each constantly working towards the full expression of health in your body.

The body's fuel may be food, but water is the underlying lubricant and base product for every cell, every muscle, every chemical reaction in your body. When the body is short of water, health, function and even emotions are continually degraded.

The self-exam;

Step one: Assess your current water intake

Begin by measuring your daily water intake - in this I mean pure water without anything else in it. This means you cannot include coffee, tea, or pop of any kind. Only pure water can be counted. Measuring is a very simple process. You can keep track in many ways; using water bottles that label how many ounces they contain or using regular glasses. The key is making sure you actually know exactly how much water is in water kind of glass/bottle you use. Don't assume! Use a measuring cup for any unlabeled bottles, glasses or cups.

Write it down over at least a 3-day time period. For a proper assessment DO NOT start drinking more water than usual until you know what your starting point actually is! This is quite important. Inhibit any desire to change your intake till you know what is has been. Once you know your ounces per day, then move to step two.

Step 2: Measure your long-term target goal. I say "long-term"

because it is important, especially if you are older or your health is already challenged, to increase your water intake gradually, as a wide generality going up around 10 ounces per week. But pay attention to your body. This is self-care and all the responsibility is upon you.

To measure your long-term goal take your body weight and divide by 2. That means one-half of your body weight should be your long-term target goal in ounces of water. If you weight 140 lbs, your target is 70 ounces per day. ("Your body's many cries for Water") Now please be careful if you weigh over 200 lbs. I do not suggest going up to or over 100 ounces a day under normal circumstances, but again, you are your own guide to this. You'll also need to add extra water for desert climate, summer heat, or caffeine intake. Caffeine is a diuretic (causes the body to shed water through urination). For each ounce of caffeine you drink you would need 1 ½ times that amount in water to make up for it.

Also note that the speed in which you drink the water is another factor. The human body can only absorb a certain amount of water at a time and the rest just flushes through the kidneys and into your bladder. Guzzling water is generally unhelpful in making your tissues and organs happy with water, though it can help with constipation. Slowing down the speed of your intake is important. I can't give exact numbers on any of this, but as far as I can find this has not been studied very well. My personal guideline is to drink water in batches, generally beginning up waking and each time I get hungry during the day. As in all self-care, find your own path and what works best for your body, keeping the general ideas in mind.

Don't drink water during or right after eating as this dilutes your digestive acids.

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