

## Hydration

Most of us have heard that a large proportion of our body is made of water. In fact, your total body weight is about 2 thirds water, and water is vital to all chemical reactions in the body, not to mention the main constituent of our life-giving blood supply.

The effects of dehydration in all aspects of health and fitness are vast, and dehydration of as little as two percent of body weight can begin to impair athletic performance as well as temperature regulation.



Below are just a select number of benefits that research has shown to accompany good hydration levels, and conversely, the opposing ramifications of poor hydration:

- Good hydration improves blood viscosity (thickness) and hence can help decrease cardiac disease, as well as aid the dilution of toxins in cancer, and the cleansing effect on airways in asthma.
  
- Good Hydration Cuts the Risk of Disease. Research studies show that good hydration cuts the risk of breast cancer by 79% reduces the risk of colon cancer by 45% and slashes the risk of bladder cancer by 50%.
  
- Good Hydration Enhances Mental Clarity. A drop of just 2% in body water causes short term memory problems and significant difficulties with concentration. Good hydration helps you become mentally alert throughout the day.
  
- Good hydration decreases Migraines. Migraine headache is often a sign of water need by the brain and behind the eyes. It is said to possibly clear up totally if dehydration is prevented from establishing in the body. The type of dehydration that causes migraine might eventually cause inflammation of the back of the eye and possibly loss of eye sight.
  
- Good Hydration Improves Digestion. A digestive system without sufficient fluid is constipated. Fluid is essential for nutrients to pass through the delicate membranes of the intestines. If the body is adequately hydrated sufficient fluid is present in the digestive track to distribute nutrients throughout the body.
  
- Good Hydration Softens Skin Texture. Adequate hydration makes it possible for water to move through all the membranes of your body so that the largest organ in the body, the skin, is adequately hydrated. Skin texture softens. The natural aging process is slowed. Wrinkles vanish. Bagging skin tightens.

- **Good Hydration Slows the Aging Process.** The reason for poor hydration as we age is the gradual decline of the thirst mechanism in the brain. When we are young and get thirsty there is no stopping us when we are thirsty. But a different story emerges as we age. The thirst signal becomes distorted because we ignore it and because we drink dehydrating drinks such as coffee or alcohol.
  
- **Good Hydration Relieves Back and Joint Pain.** Low back pain and ankylosing arthritis of the spine are signs of water shortage in the spinal column and discs - the water cushions that support the weight of the body. A little known fact is that adequate hydration has been shown to relieve back and joint pain for as many as 80% of sufferers.
  
- **Good Hydration Helps Control Body Weight.** For many people the thirst mechanism in the body is so weak that it is mistaken for hunger in one third of Americans. Instead of drinking water we eat. Adequate hydration resets the thirst mechanism in the brain so that hunger is not confused with thirst. The obvious benefit is a subsequent loss of excess weight that is caused by eating too much food.

In summary, what are the mind-boggling benefits of good hydration?

- We look and feel younger.
- Mental clarity gets a welcome boost.
- Our digestive system functions at optimum levels
- Weight control is restored.
- Ability to handle stress is enhanced.
- Pain from aching joints is reduced.
- Overall flexibility is restored.

All systems in the body function at their peak potential with good hydration.

As simple minded as it may sound, water is the secret to good health.

### **Total Body Water:**

Female:	50-60%
Male:	55-65%
Athletic Body Types:	5% higher than usual range