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Water: How Much Is Enough?

The Reality

Everyone knows that staying hydrated is vitally important. The continuity of personal well-being demands that we incorporate a balanced liquid regimen. So why is it that the majority of people in North America, even with access to readily available supply of clean water and other liquids, is always in a state of mild chronic dehydration? Interestingly, the answers to correct this dilemma are rather simple, but somehow difficult to implement due to the uniqueness of the individual. In time, we will address all components of hydration, but the primary focus of this article will be on the most important aspect: Quantity.

The Benchmark

So there is a common sense realization in hydration: I need water to *live*. The second realization is more difficult to define: How much water should one drink to *survive*. Is there a benchmark? The average person,

either through ignorance or intent, does not keep track of their water consumption by container; let alone taking into account water from food and other liquids. However, to be fair, even die hard fitness enthusiasts find it challenging to maintain consistent data regarding their intake from all sources. So in order to keep it at the simplest level, a basic equation evolved to calculate the hydration minimum for the average person regardless of age. The research concluded with this formula: a milliliter of water per calorie consumed per day. So if we take the national recommended caloric intake of 2000 calories and mirror that with water intake, it computes to 2000 milliliters or 2 liters (8 cups) of water daily. It seems simple enough, but than why is it so cumbersome to drink 8 cups of water, but not everything else like soda and alcohol? We'll evaluate that conundrum in a future article.

What About Me?

If the above equation isn't your cup of water and you want a more individual diagnosis that factors in your age, weight, caloric intake, etc., you're in luck... kind of. A query via Google Search will provide you a plethora of hydration calculators that are designed to provide you a more personal touch. Now you might have

noticed that we did not include the word "accurate". The reason being is that there is no *universal* consensus regarding the *science* of hydration. So caution is advised and do not solely base your recommended fluid intake on any one particular equation.

The New Benchmark?

Ever heard of the gallon challenge? It's a simple task: drink a gallon of water every day for 30 days. The primary goal is to instill consistency regarding water intake. This is a format that has recently come to the forefront in recent years and has, in a way, turned into a popular (and somewhat obnoxious) fad of sorts; especially with bodybuilders and hardcore lifters (CrossFit is a good example. It's common to mark different set points on the container as a visual "drink me" reminder. In addition to being a primitive timer, there is the added benefit of having a container that you are able to carry around with you wherever you go; at work, the gym, etc. Now, besides being fitness chic, is there any science behind this? The simple answer is no, but as stated earlier, it is an excellent visual reminder to drink water throughout the day.

Continued...

So What Should I...

Drink water, but never to excess! Supplement with water enriched foods and balance with other fluids reinforced with electrolytes and minerals. Experiment with current doctrine and practices. Find one that is suitable for your lifestyle. And last, but not least, a friendly PSA for those individuals using *thirst* as the simplest of determiners: If you're thirsty, you're *already dehydrated*.



BENEFITS OF STAYING HYDRATED



DEHYDRATION

herbs-info.com

Dehydration (hypohydration) is the excessive loss of body water with an accompanying disruption of metabolic processes.



75% of Americans are Chronically Dehydrated



Dehydration is a major cause of infant illness and death throughout the world and hospitalization for the elderly.

Signs and Symptoms:

- 💧 thirst
- 💧 headache
- 💧 general discomfort
- 💧 loss of appetite
- 💧 dry skin
- 💧 decreased urine volume
- 💧 confusion
- 💧 unexplained tiredness
- 💧 irritability

Causes:

- ☒ Blood loss or hypotension due to physical trauma
- ☒ Loss of fluid through weeping burns or other injury
- ☒ Crying
- ☒ Diarrhea
- ☒ Fever
- ☒ Hyperthermia
- ☒ Shock (hypovolemic)
- ☒ Vomiting or nausea

Risk Factors:

- 👉 Infants and children
- 👉 Older adults
- 👉 People with chronic illnesses
- 👉 Endurance athletes
- 👉 People living at high altitudes
- 👉 People working or exercising outside in hot, humid weather



10 cups of fluid a day are lost through sweating, exhaling, urinating and bowel movements



Adults require 2-3 L of fluid per day

TOP HYDRATING FOODS



Cucumber



Watermelon



Celery



Grapefruit



Radish



Tomatoes



Cauliflower



Strawberries



Cantaloupe



Broccoli

COMING SOON!! The Trainer's Corner!



I am excited to start featuring articles and comments from our trainers and instructors! If there are any particular health and wellness topics you'd like to see addressed, please submit them to me at mark.jacobson@robson.com. I will also work on providing a link via the What's Happening newsletter. I hope to hear from you!

