

STAY HYDRATED!

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Most of us are chronically dehydrated and don't even know it! Even low levels of dehydration can zap our energy, cause mood changes, and in general throw off our chemical make-up! Just as important as eating good foods is putting a good amount of liquids into your body! Just a few physiological benefits of being properly hydrated...helps keep your body at safe temperatures, lubricates joints, removes waste from the body, and maintains a healthy metabolism.

Small amounts of dehydration can cause us to walk around feeling tired, weak, irritable, thinking maybe we didn't get enough sleep...which is possible...or maybe we are just having a bad day? All of these physical and mental reactions can be due to subtle dehydration!

So, how much water do we really need? Here are a few smart water strategies to strive for in your daily eating/drinking activities:

1. Water is found in many different fruits and vegetables....watermelon is over 90% water! Other fruits and veggies that contain a significant amount of water include tomatoes, cucumbers, and cantaloupe. Soups and stews can be hydrating, as can yogurt and other soft creams. Tea and coffee contain mostly water, just beware of the added calories you might get from different sweeteners and fat that can be added. My strategy? I have a large, insulated cup/mug that I keep with me all day every day that I sip on throughout the day...that way without even thinking about it...I'm staying hydrated!
2. Do you really need 8 glasses of water/day? It's not a magic number, but it IS a good goal to shoot for! It would be nearly impossible to overhydrate to an unhealthy extent. Healthy kidneys remove any unnecessary or unneeded levels of water in the body. The only drawback is you might be visiting the bathroom a bit more often! Daily fluid intake recommendations vary by age, sex, pregnancy, and breastfeeding status. According to the Institute of Medicine – Food and Nutrition Board, adult women should aim for 2.7 liters, and adult men 3.7 liters of total fluid intake from all food and water sources. Obviously, this would change due to increased levels of physical activity and higher outside temperatures where loss of fluids occurs more rapidly.

So, always carry water with you, have it on your desk, keep one with you when you are physical active, and try to have a minimum of one glass of water before each meal. These few strategies could make the difference in a happier physiological and emotional you!