

- Drinking water

Drinking sufficient water contributes to good health

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WATER is an essential component of the human body. It regulates body temperature through sweating, lubricates joints, cushions the brain and spinal cord and transports nutrients and oxygen to cells.



It constitutes about 60% of total body weight.

It helps digestion and circulation, promotes weight loss and improves the skin's complexion. It is involved in the production of hormones and neurotransmitters. All the body's cells and organs require water to function properly. It helps flush out waste products through urine and sweat.

Because our bodies lose water through sweating and digestion, as well as urination and bowel movements, it is important to drink sufficient water to replace it. If we lose more water than we drink, we are in danger of dehydration.

How much to drink

Recommendations on the amount of water we should drink vary with weight, age, activity level, weather and gender.

Being thirsty is an indication your body needs water. We should, if possible, have a drink when we feel thirsty rather than ignoring the thirst and postponing having a drink until later.

However, it is better not to wait until we are thirsty to have a drink, in the same way that we do not wait until we are hungry to have a meal.

Some people do not feel thirsty until they are already dehydrated.

Older people often do not feel as thirsty young.

Making a practice of drinking as when they were before and after meals is a good idea. It is ideal to carry a bottle of water to work and drink water every two hours or so or at least when we begin to feel thirsty.

Some experts have suggested we should drink on average eight glasses of water a day. Some people might need less than this and others more.

You should drink more if you have been sweating as a result of exercise, hot weather or a fever. If your body loses more fluids than normal through vomiting or diarrhoea, you should also drink more. The same applies to frequent urination. If you are pregnant or breastfeeding you may need additional fluids.

Water is the basic ingredient of most drinks, so drinking tea or coffee or a soft drink contributes to overall water consumption. There is also water in many of the foods we eat.

However, sugary drinks are best avoided. They contain calories but little nutritional value and increase your sugar intake. Alcoholic drinks should only be consumed in moderation. You can be fairly sure you are drinking enough if you rarely feel thirsty and your urine is clear or light yellow. If it is dark yellow, this indicates you are not drinking enough water.

Benefits of drinking water

Water flushes harmful toxins from your body, chiefly through sweat and urine, and transports oxygen to the body cells, ensuring proper functioning of the body.

Drinking sufficient water helps maintain the proper viscosity of blood and plasma as well as the distribution of fibrinogen, thereby, ensuring good heart health.

Our lungs, kidneys and liver play a role in detoxifying our body. Water carries the toxins out of the body.

Drinking sufficient water helps keep the kidneys and urinary tract healthy.

Water can brain power.

A glass of water is more beneficial for your brain than a cup of coffee.

Dehydration, that is suffering from insufficient water in your body, negatively affects your also boost your brainpower by reducing your cognitive and motor skills. It increases your sensitivity to pain, reduces your memory and affects your mood.

Dehydration also causes headaches, because of the influence of dehydration on brain function. In addition to boosting brainpower, drinking water can help prevent and relieve headaches caused by dehydration.

Taking water before, during and after a meal helps your digestive system break down the food you eat more easily. If you frequently experience digestive system problems, you should drink water immediately after you eat.

If you do not drink enough water, you are more likely to experience constipation. On the other hand, if you are constipated, drinking plain water or carbonated water can help ease symptoms.

Consuming too much sodium or fibre without drinking adequate water can cause bloating. Bloating can be treated by drinking a lot of water or peppermint tea .

Water dilutes minerals and salts that can concentrate in the kidneys to become kidney stones.

Drinking enough water is good for your skin. It improves skin tone, prevents premature aging and promotes faster healing. Taking warm, vitamin C rich lemon water daily is likely to keep your skin glowing.

Taking adequate water before workouts helps you exercise for longer and avoid muscle cramps.

Negative mood, fatigue, anger and confusion increase when you are dehydrated. Drinking sufficient is likely to reduce stress, improve your mood and help you maintain a healthy blood pressure and heart rate.

Your immune system also needs adequate fluid to produce lymph, which plays an essential role in keeping you healthy.

If your body organs are not functioning effectively, you will feel fatigued and weak. Drinking water ensures that your body organs are functioning optimally, which keeps you energised. Drinking cold water helps to raise metabolism as the body must produce more energy to increase temperature, which makes your body burn more calories.

In conclusion, drinking water is essential for maintaining good health.

It plays a crucial role in regulating body temperature, lubricating joints, transporting nutrients and oxygen to cells, flushing out waste products from the body, maintaining healthy skin and promoting weight loss. It is important, therefore, to drink plenty of water every day. The information in this article is provided as a public service by the Cimas igo Wellness programme, which is designed to promote good health. It is provided for general information only and should not be construed as medical advice. Readers should consult their doctor or clinic on any matter related to their health or the treatment of any health problem. — igo@cimas.co.zw or Whatsapp 0772 161 829 or phone 024-2773 0663.