

Water - The Ultimate Health Drink

Everyday another health fad, diet or product emerges onto the market claiming to provide instant miracles such as cures for illness, weight loss or creating a completely new you! Sometimes we become so captivated with the latest new and modern craze that we forget the simple things especially the simplest of all - the incredible health benefits obtained by our most abundant natural resource - water. Water, which flows so freely in Dominica's multitude of rivers, is nature's finest gift and has the potential to be the preventative and curative of almost all disease.

As most people are aware our body is made up of 75% water, and it is a substance that is required for every cellular function in the body. The optimum amount of water the body requires daily to function effectively is 2.5 litres (about 8 glasses). Our kidneys, which are the main organ of the urinary system, are responsible for filtering our blood, extracting waste products and mixing them with excess water in the body to form urine. If they do not have enough water to obtain this extra amount the water is taken from our vital bodily supply causing dehydration and a build up of toxins.

A few years ago I attended a lecture by the prominent Ugandan medical researcher Dr Ssali who explained that the majority of cells in our body are constantly replaced and renewed by a reproduction process whereby they make copies of themselves. If the cells are dehydrated they are unable to carry out this function properly which leads to poor cellular reproduction and cell mutations that can then cause a range of symptoms from premature aging to cancer.

Another key figure in promoting water for health is Dr F Batmanghelidj who has undertaken extensive research into the many health benefits of water and has applied his work with amazing results, many of which are documented in his book 'Your Body's Many Cries For Water.' He has shown that the majority of diseases in the body stem from dehydration and therefore, if not too advanced, can be cured with water. He has restored full health to people suffering with a range of ailments from ulcers to high blood pressure and diabetes by a simple re-hydration process and asserts that if we were to drink the right amount of water each day we could prevent these afflictions from occurring in the first place.

It is important to note that not just any liquid will work to offer these amazing health benefits. Water (including that from jelly coconuts) is the great cleanser and purifier, the energiser and healer. Drinking other liquids such as coffee, tea, soft drinks and alcohol can lead to further problems as many of these drinks are diuretics and cause the body to excrete more water than usual which can quickly cause dehydration. The amount of sugar present in soft drinks or added to hot drinks also causes the body to utilise more water in an effort to dilute it and again depletes the supply for use by the rest of our body. Just 2% less water than necessary leads to a decrease in mental functioning which can often lead us to reach for coffee or unhealthy snacks to stay alert. Yet by drinking enough water we would not suffer the mental fatigue, which then propels us to reach for caffeine or sugar to revive our waning energy.

It has also been proven that many of the symptoms associated with hunger or sugar cravings are actually caused by lack of water. Thus if we were to drink the right amount of water per day we would be less likely to be overweight or prone to excess blood sugar – the forerunners to many other diseases. It is important to remember to maintain a balanced supply of water by drinking throughout the day as the feeling of thirst is actually one of the last symptoms of dehydration. The mouth can still feel moist after the body has become dehydrated so we need to drink water before we are gasping for it!

There are a multitude of additional health benefits that water can bring to the mind, body and spirit and water plays a significant part in many spiritual practices as an element of purification. The earth,

like our bodies, is also made up of over 70% water and is a macrocosmic reflection of our internal being. Water is a magical substance that has constantly being recycled and reused throughout the ages, it is the very essence of life and health and deserves all due respect. It is crucial for the health of ourselves and the planet that we avoid polluting our water to ensure that we always have a fresh, clean and pure supply for our current population, future generations and for all other life forms that we share the earth with. Treat yourself to the very best - pour yourself a large glass of water right now and enjoy water for life!

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