



Is drinking tank rainwater or distilled water dehydrating you?

Many rural people in Australia drink rainwater, collected in tanks. Distillation mimics the natural process of evaporation and condensation that ultimately creates rain. Rainwater would be distilled water in an unpolluted world. In reality rainwater is distilled water with the pollutants of our modern world added!

The distillation process involves boiling water into steam and then condensing the collected steam back into liquid water. This removes most of the minerals, organisms and impurities from the water.

Distillation is a great way of extracting minerals from water and therefore distilled water can be classified as 'soft' water. It lacks the minerals usually present in 'hard' water, particularly calcium and magnesium, but also other trace minerals.

People often think of distilled water as the purest, cleanest, safest form of water. This type of 'soft' water is 'safer', in that potentially harmful organisms have been destroyed. But in achieving this, distilled water is devoid of most minerals, and this impacts negatively on our bodies. Rainwater is also devoid of minerals but can include a multitude of contaminants such as microorganisms, chemicals from smoke, pesticides, herbicides, traces of toxic metals etc.

As you know drinking water is critical to keep our bodies hydrated. Water plays numerous important roles in our bodies, to support good health, and is part of every one of our cells. In addition to water our bodies require the right balance of electrolytes to be able to adequately absorb, and utilise, water in our cells.

Electrolytes are chemicals in our bodies that perform a range of important functions, including facilitating the hydration of our cells. Electrolytes are minerals that break apart into ions when dissolved in water. The lack of minerals in distilled/tank rain water means the water pulls minerals from our body, by osmosis, as it goes through our digestive tract. The process of osmosis requires a semi-permeable membrane, in this case, the digestive tract. Minerals pass through it, from the higher concentration in our bodies to the lower concentration of minerals, in the distilled/tank rain water in our digestive tracts, until the mineral concentration is in equilibrium, equal on both sides. The distilled water can't be absorbed into our bodies, due to its lack of adequate minerals and in addition, it pulls minerals from our bodies too. If we consume distilled/tank rain water, and don't add back minerals that are the basis for important electrolytes, then it is easy to become dehydrated from drinking plain water!



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Our kidneys play a key role in regulating mineral levels by excreting or retaining minerals. If minerals have been lost from our bodies, with the consumption of distilled water, our kidneys will excrete water to ensure our bodies stay in homeostasis. The more we drink distilled/tank rain water, the more urine we produce and in the excretion of urine some minerals will be lost too. Therefore the problem is compounded, our cells absorb less fluid and minerals are lost in our urine.

The regular consumption of distilled water, especially if we already lack minerals, as many of us do, can exacerbate mineral deficiencies, as well as dehydration. This loss of minerals and our inability to use the distilled water we drink, for hydration, is the main reason that drinking distilled water may not be a good choice for most people. However this clean, safe water can be a sound choice provided you are replenishing the water with minerals prior to drinking it. These minerals can be obtained in commercial products like Cellfood, ConcenTrace Trace Mineral Drops or simply by adding a good quality, UNREFINED salt like Celtic sea salt or Himalayan rock salt.

In summary, distilled/tank rain water is stripped of both good and bad minerals and is unlikely to be the best long term choice for most people unless the minerals lost are replenished. If we consume only distilled/tank rain water it lacks adequate minerals to aid absorption of fluid into our cells. It also pulls minerals from our bodies, by osmosis, therefore it can have a dehydrating effect. The simple addition of minerals may improve this water, for drinking, by increasing hydration levels and not depleting the body of minerals. Unfortunately very few people know that their 'soft', fresh rainwater could be greatly improved, very simply.

Many of the cultures in which people live long, healthy lives are located in regions with mineral rich mountain waters, the exact opposite to distilled/ tank rain water. Although the mineral levels in water are not sufficient to satisfy all the body's needs, every little helps. And the minerals are crucial for the body to be able to absorb the water and use it for its many important functions.

If you have any questions relating to this article, please do not hesitate to contact me to arrange a free 20 minute phone call.



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