



The Importance of Hydration

Water is our most important nutrient, but dehydration/lack of water is probably the most common nutrient deficiency in Australia. Water makes up about 60% of our body weight (in an average adult, that's 38-50 litres of water) and is required for numerous body processes. You can go about 8 weeks without food, but only days without water.

The body can produce about 8% of its daily water needs through metabolic processes. The remaining 92% must be ingested through the foods we eat and the beverages we drink.

There are many reasons to stay hydrated including:

Improves oxygen delivery to cells	Removes wastes
Transports nutrients	Flushes toxins
Enables cellular hydration	Prevents tissues from sticking
Moistens oxygen for easier breathing	Lubricates joints
Cushions bones and joints	Improves cell-to-cell communications
Absorbs shocks to joints and organs	Regulates body temperature
Maintains normal electrical properties of cells	Empowers the body's natural healing process

What Is Dehydration?

If the body's water content drops by as little as 2%, it will cause fatigue. A drop of 10% will cause significant digestive, cardiovascular, immune, and musculoskeletal health problems. Losses greater than 10% can cause death. Here are some signs of dehydration:

<u>Early Signs of Dehydration:</u>	<u>Mature Signs of Dehydration:</u>
Fatigue	Heartburn
Anxiety	Joint Pain
Irritability	Back Pain
Depression	Migraines
Cravings	Fibromyalgia
Cramps	Constipation
Headaches	Colitis

How to Stay Hydrated

Like nutrition, water needs are always bio-individual. Some individuals will need more water than others in hotter temperatures, during intense physical activity, or when experiencing intense stress, blood sugar dysregulation, etc. While the quantity of water intake should be tailored to each person, **a good general guideline in litres is your bodyweight in kilograms divided by 30**. For example an average healthy 60 kg person would require 2L of water a day (60kg/30 =2L). Beware of **dehydrating beverages** such as tea, coffee, soft drinks and alcohol. For each of these beverages consumed, **add 1.5 times their volume to your water intake**. For example add 375ml of additional water for a 250ml cup of coffee (250ml x 1.5 = 375ml).



Good water consumption habits include:

- **Add a pinch of sea salt to your water:** Sea salt contains dozens of minerals, including the electrolytes calcium, magnesium, potassium, and sodium that help you better absorb and utilize the water you drink. This is particularly important if you drink tank rainwater. Please **contact me** if you would like a further article emailed to you to understand why.....
- **Sip, don't chug:** The body can only process a limited amount of water at a time. You will be able to absorb and utilize the water you drink more efficiently if you take small sips over a longer period of time.
- **Drink most of your water away from meals:** Sipping a little water with meals is fine but try to consume most of your water between meals to avoid diluting stomach acid and negatively impacting digestion. Thoroughly chewing each bite will help provide most of the lubrication needed throughout the meal.
- **Drink clean water:** Get your water from clean, reliable sources and use a good water filter system for water that you drink or bathe in.

Summary

Optimal health requires daily consumption of sufficient water since the human body does not store water long-term. We're not camels after all! Water is the most important nutrient and makes up about 60% of our body weight. Adequate hydration is necessary for basic human function. There are many ways to stay hydrated like adding a pinch of sea salt to your water. Before you grab a cup coffee to get you through the midday dip, try hydrating first. Your body will thank you!

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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Additional reading: *Quench: Beat Fatigue, Drop Weight, and Heal Your Body Through the New Science of Optimum Hydration* by Dana Cohen and Gina Bria