

q fitness: with CHRIS GREGORIOU

Drinking like a fish, its actually good for you....

What do you see when you look at a glass of water? Just a clear boring liquid?

With boring, comes an essential ingredient to life, which without, you wouldn't survive. Next to air, water is the next element most necessary for survival. Did you know that we can go without food for up to two months, but without water within days, you would struggle to function.



To give you an idea how critical water is to our every day life, without water, our waste products would poison us. Water is critical for chemical reactions in digestion and metabolism and is the carrier of nutrients and oxygen to your cells through the blood as well as helping cool the body via perspiration and is also a lubricant for your joints.

How good is water for your body

Regulates your body temperature
Is a waste remover
Protects and cushions vital organs
Helps to convert food to energy
A key moistener of oxygen for breathing
A transporter of nutrients and oxygen to cells
Helps your body absorb nutrients

Water makes up

20% of your bones
70% of muscles
75% of your brain
80% of your blood
90% of your lungs

As water plays such a large role in our body, dehydration is something that affects us in huge ways, most we wouldn't even consider. Of course, something you should try to avoid at all times. A dry mouth is usually the last outward sign of extreme dehydration. Dehydration can have a wide range of effects, from heartburn, stomach ache, low back pain, headache, mental irritation, poor muscle tone, digestive complications, muscle soreness, depression and water retention (yes, ironic but true).

Do you know how much water you should drink each day just to stay hydrated is? It's quite common to not know, and many people generally live in a dehydrated state. The National Health and Medical Research Council guidelines recommend adult men drink 2.6 liters of fluid and adult women drink 2.1 litres of fluid per average day. If your exercising, sweating, around air conditioning, not getting enough sleep, living or working in extremely hot climates you should be increasing your fluid intake as a guide by 25%. As we are all different, its best to listen to our body as our individual needs will vary and these are only guidelines. If after drinking your daily quota for water, you still feel thirsty or show symptoms that could occur if your dehydrated, try drinking some more water, especially if your trying to shed a few kilos and exercising hard.

It's true that being dehydrated can make it hard to shed excess body fat and the messages your brain send you when its thirsty can easily be those of hunger. It's quite natural for the body to seek food as a source of water because about 35% of our daily water intake is obtained from food. Think about it, fruits and vegetables are comprised of about 75% to 95% of water, with cooked meat around 50%-60%. Given this, its very easy for your body to signal that it's hungry in order to get more water via food.

The body gives off strong messages when it needs more of this essential and important liquid, which is why thirst masquerading as hunger can be so compelling.

Staying hydrated is important for many reasons, especially if your trying to shed a few kilos:

- The process of burning calories requires an adequate supply of water in order to function efficiently; dehydration slows down the fat-burning process
- Burning calories creates toxins (think of the exhaust coming out of your car), and water plays a vital role in flushing them out of your body.
- Dehydration causes a reduction in blood volume; a reduction in blood volume causes a reduction in the supply of oxygen to your muscles; and a reduction in the supply of oxygen to your muscles can make you feel tired.
- Water helps maintain muscle tone by assisting muscles in their ability to contract, and it lubricates your joints. Proper hydration can help reduce muscle and joint soreness when exercising.

So stay hydrated as water is essential to every bodily function. It is also inexpensive and calorie-free, making it the perfect drink for dieting". By consuming those eight to ten glasses of pure water each day, you could be on your way to a healthier, leaner body.