

## Health and Wellness: Got Water?

**By Laura Jimenez, M.S.W.**

Most people are aware that they need to drink plenty of water to stay healthy. Water helps your body to perform its daily functions such as digestion, respiration, detoxification and temperature and blood regulation. It also helps to properly assimilate nutrients and maintain your body's largest organ, your skin.

**Quantity is imperative!** As a rule of thumb, a 150 lb. person should drink about 75 ounces of water throughout the day. Children need even more water than adults since their immune and detoxification systems are not fully developed making contaminants far more impactful to their bodies. With the exploding number of ADD, ADHD and autism cases, researchers are increasingly suspecting pesticides and herbicides found in water. Both are proven to adversely affect thyroid hormones since children are less capable of fully removing these chemicals from their bodies. This article is not meant to scare you – it's meant to educate you to make the best choice for you and your family.

**Everyone should drink even more when undergoing extra stress, toxins and/or pollutants.** Since thirst is an unreliable gauge for a body's water needs, try not to wait until you're thirsty to drink up. Under normal circumstances, urine should be clear or nearly clear. Mild dehydration from not drinking enough water can cause dry skin, dark colored urine, headache, dizziness or lightheadedness and fatigue. Those who wait until their urine is dark yellow are slipping into a mild dehydration. Other reasons to drink up are to avoid serious ailments attributable to chronic dehydration such as weight gain, premature aging, high cholesterol, digestive disturbances such as constipation or heartburn, autoimmune diseases such as chronic fatigue syndrome or multiple sclerosis as well as urinary tract infections and worse.

Regarding quality of water, most people are not fortunate to have Earth's best water (a natural mountain spring) in close proximity. The next best choice is purified well water. Most everyone is left with a choice between tap water which can contain hazardous chemicals and bottled water which carries environmental concerns. Most municipal water supplies are regulated by the EPA. FDA regulates bottled water and the only requirement is that it should be as good as tap water. Overall, bottled water is less regulated than tap water. The potential for fraud exists with bottled water until lax governmental regulations change.

**A water filter is a must!** A water filter's main job is to remove contaminants. No public water system is exempt from some level of unhealthy chemicals. Current regulations only require periodic testing of approximately 91 chemicals, and there are over 1,000 new chemicals developed every year. Across the country, over 2,100 toxic chemicals have been detected. South Florida uses the Biscayne Aquifer. There's a saying that if you pour it on the ground today, you'll be drinking it tomorrow. Thus, be mindful of your contribution.

**Whatever you do, remember that any filter is better than no filter.** If you don't have a filter, then you are the filter! Use distilled water with caution since long-term use can invite health problems because minerals are evaporated. Don't be fooled by vitamin waters which contain high fructose corn syrup, artificial colors, additives, preservatives and caffeine.

**Develop an effective system to timely follow up on filter replacements.** Reverse-osmosis, carbon and charcoal are a few of the different types of filtration systems: Cost varies from an inexpensive filter connected to a water jug, kitchen faucet and elaborate entire household systems. Choose the most cost-effective one on a cost-per-gallon basis that is the best fit for your budget. Strive for a cost of less than 10 cents per gallon. Besides cleaning your body on the inside, there are many reasons why strong consideration should be given to installing a household filtration system for your body on the outside. Make sure to read Dr. Joseph Mercola's many articles on water filtration if you are planning to install an expensive system.

**Approximately 40% of bottled water is actually tap water.** Besides paying lots of money for bottled water, consider that independent testers, Environmental Working Group, found arsenic, disinfection byproducts (DBPs) and 36 other harmful pollutants hiding in bottled water. Be healthier, save money and go green by purchasing and reusing an adequate number of BPA-free and phthalate-free bottles which are dishwasher safe or thoroughly cleaned by hand washing. Also, keep plastic bottles out of sun.

**Instead of turning to stimulants like caffeine or sugar to boost your energy, see how you feel after a tall glass of water.** (If you're addicted to caffeine, wean off.) Remember to always pack trustworthy water and drink it! Did you know that just a 5 percent drop in body fluids can cause a 25 to 30 percent loss of energy? This author's wish for everyone is to reach and keep your ideal weight (use water to shed excess fat) and prevent as many ailments as possible by simply drinking enough clean water. This article only scratches the surface so read as much as you can. Websites used for this article are:

- 1) <http://waterfilters.mercola.com/drinking-water-filter.aspx>
- 2) <http://science.howstuffworks.com/environmental/earth/geophysics/run-out-of-water.htm>
- 3) <http://www.mercola.com/article/water.htm>
- 4) [http://www.freedrinkingwater.com/water\\_health/health1/1-why-drink-water-not-thirsty.htm](http://www.freedrinkingwater.com/water_health/health1/1-why-drink-water-not-thirsty.htm)
- 5) <http://www.ewg.org/>
- 6) <http://chemistry.about.com/cs/5/f/blwaterintox.htm>

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