

Importance of Drinking Water

From "The Snowbird Diet" by Donald S. Robertson, M.D., M.Sc. and Carol Robertson

Incredible as it may seem, water is probably the single most important catalyst in losing weight and keeping it off. Although most of us take it for granted, water may be the only true "magic potion" for permanent weight loss.

Water suppresses the appetite and helps the body metabolize stored fat. Studies show that a decrease in water intake may cause fat deposits to increase, while an increase in water can actually reduce the fat deposits in the body. The kidneys do not function properly without enough water and when this occurs, some of their function is passed on to the liver. The liver works to metabolize stored fat into usable energy for the body, so if the liver has to help the kidneys, it cannot function effectively and consequently metabolizes less fat. Thus, fat remains stored in the body and weight loss will stop. People who are prone to water retention often think that reducing their water intake will help to remedy this problem. Actually, the opposite occurs. The body perceives a lack of water as a threat to its survival so it attempts to hold on to every drop. Water is then stored in spaces outside the body's cells, causing swollen feet, hands, and legs. The best way to overcome excess water retention is to give the body what it needs - plenty of water.

If you have a constant problem with water retention, excess salt may be to blame. Your body will tolerate sodium only in certain concentrations. The more salt you eat, the more water your system retains to dilute it. But getting rid of unneeded salt is easy - just drink more water. As it is forced through the kidneys, it takes away excess sodium.

Water also helps to maintain proper muscle tone by giving back the muscles' natural ability to contract and by preventing dehydration. Water helps prevent sagging skin that often accompanies weight loss. Shrinking cells are plumped up by water and the complexion appears clear, healthy and radiant.

Water flushes waste from the body - a particularly important function when losing weight as there are toxins being released from the fat cells - and eliminates problems with constipation.

So far, we have discovered some remarkable truths about water and about weight loss. The body will not function properly without enough water and cannot metabolize stored fat efficiently. Retained water shows up as excess weight. To get rid of excess water you must drink more water. Drinking water is essential to weight loss. Water should preferably be cold - it is absorbed more

quickly into the system than warm water. Some evidence suggests that drinking cold water can actually burn calories. To utilize water most efficiently during weight loss, follow this schedule:

Morning: 1 quart consumed over a 30 minute period.
Noon: 1 quart consumed over a 30 minute period.
Evening: 1 quart consumed between 5-8 p.m.

How Much Water Is Enough?

At least 64 ounces a day, preferably 72 ounces, and if you are overweight you need to add one glass (8 ounces), for every 25 pounds you need to lose. An easy rule of thumb is to divide your weight in half to determine how many ounces of water you need to drink daily.

So to sum up, getting enough water is critical because....

- The body will not metabolize stored fat without it
- Retained water shows up as excess weight
- When you drink enough water, more fat is used as fuel because it frees up the liver to metabolize stored fat
- There is a loss of hunger almost overnight

When the body gets the water it needs to function optimally, its fluids are perfectly balanced. When this happens, you have reached the "breakthrough point". What does that mean? Endocrine gland function improves. Fluid retention is alleviated as stored water is lost. More fat is used as fuel because the liver is free to metabolize stored fat. Natural thirst returns. There is a loss of hunger almost overnight. If you stop drinking enough water, your body fluids will be thrown out of balance again and you may experience fluid retention, unexplained weight gain and loss of thirst. To remedy this situation, you have to go back and force another breakthrough.

To emphasize:

- Water suppresses the appetite.
- Water metabolizes fat into energy.
- Increasing water input, reduces fat deposits.
- The body will not function properly without enough water and can not metabolize stored fat efficiently.
- Retained water shows up as excess weight.
- To get rid of excess water, one has to consume more water.
- Drinking water is essential for weight loss.
- Water helps muscle stimulation.
- It is important to drink water before and after exercise.
- One should drink two quarts of water a day.