

The Grass is Greener when it's Watered!

Don't let water get lost in the sauce! We have so many other beverages that are popular and we tend to forget that it's not just liquids that we need but --- pure, fresh water. Many kids drink milk, soda, energy drinks, fruit juices, and fruit punches, and we fail to realize that these are FOODS! Because of their sugar, fat or protein content, the body must activate digestion in order to utilize them.

Water on the other hand is a digestive aid. It is the medium with which we digest, dissolve, absorb, assimilate and transport nutrients throughout the body. Remember, the body is roughly composed of 25 percent solid matter and 75 percent water. Brain tissue is composed of 74 percent water and the blood is 83 percent water. This is key to good quality of life.

Water is necessary for numerous metabolic functions:

- Digestion of food
- Transport of food to the tissue
- Elimination of body wastes
- Circulation of body fluids (lymph and blood)
- Lubrication of joints and internal organs
- Passage of substances between the cells and blood vessels
- Regulation of body temperature
- Making dissolved minerals available to the body tissues

There is a fascinating book written on the topic of healing with water, called *The Body's Many Cries for Water*. The author, Dr. Batmanghelidj, was a medical doctor who, as a political prisoner in Iran, researched about the medicinal value of water. He later published a report in the *Journal of Clinical Gastroenterology*, in June of 1983. His revelations range from eliminating headaches with water to normalizing blood pressure, to healing asthma and eczema.

The premise, upon which his book is based, is that many of us are dehydrated and don't know it. Either we're:

1. Not drinking enough water
2. The water is not absorbing into the cells, or
3. We have mineral deficiencies causing dehydration.

For many children and teenagers, water is an after-thought. First on their list is usually a cola, energy drink, mocha or iced tea. Kids are taking in more caffeine now than ever, and from this they become dehydrated. Water is the only liquid that hydrates or re-hydrates. Let's examine the effects this might have.

Symptoms of Dehydration

- Anxiety and depression
- Difficulty losing weight
- Digestive problems
- Dry lips and mouth
- Dry, Itchy skin
- Excess body fat
- Headaches or migraines
- High blood pressure
- Kidney and bladder problems
- Lack of energy
- Muscle soreness
- Persistent constipation
- Poor muscle tone and size
- Rapid heart beat
- Short term memory loss
- Poor focus or concentration
- Water retention problems
- Wrinkling and poor skin tone

Many children with allergies, asthma, skin problems, constipation, stomach aches, arthritis, headaches and hyperactivity are actually dehydrated. **You can drink a lot of liquids and still be dehydrated**, especially if the liquids are sweet, as in fruit juices and sodas. These children may or may not be thirsty, but they are still dehydrated.

Dark, concentrated urine in small amounts, dry mouth, chapped lips, eczema, breathing problems and excessive thirst are all signs of dehydration in your child. Healthy urine is usually pale and yellow, and frequency of output should be about every two to four hours.

This is excerpted from "Our Children Are...What Our Children Eat" Nutritional Solutions for Improving Behavior, Health and School Performance by Dr. Laura Thompson