



Water: Does a Body Good

Brain - When brain cells are well hydrated, the body is supplied with “fresh, oxygen-laden blood” and allows the brain to remain alert. With that said, slight dehydration of just one-to-two percent loss in body weight may reduce concentration in some individuals. More than two percent lost to dehydration can hinder the brain’s function of short-term memory.

Cells - When the body is hydrated, it is easier to transport carbohydrates, vitamins, minerals and other nutrients, as well as oxygen, to the cells of the body. Cells are able to create or produce energy for the body to function. Hydration also is essential for the disposal of waste products by engaging the right cellular chemical function.

Digestive Tract - Hydration plays a crucial role in the digestion of food and absorption of nutrients throughout the digestive tract. In order to dissolve nutrients, water is needed so the nutrients are able to be absorbed into the blood stream. Hydration also does slow the digestive process. Poor hydration can lead to constipation, as well.

Heart - Fluids assist in heart function. Therefore, correct water regulation of water balance is necessary to keep blood pressure within the healthy heart range. When the heart does not get enough water, cardiac output can lead to an increase in heart rate and drop in blood pressure.

Kidneys - Kidneys are the organs that remove waste. In order to keep the kidneys functioning, water intake is essential. Water helps the kidneys to remove waste products and extra nutrients that the body can no longer use through urine. These organs also have a role in regulating the body’s water levels by increasing or decreasing the flow of urine and also work to control normal levels of sodium and other electrolytes. Kidneys in a healthy person filter about 180 liters of water every day, and with that, most of the water is re-absorbed to prevent losses from the body.

Muscles and Joints - Water is used in the muscles and joints as a cushion which keeps them working properly. Muscles and joints are necessary for allowing the body to stand, sit, move, and perform daily activities. Amazingly, muscle is made of about 70 to 75 percent of water.

Skin - Skin is the barrier to prevent the body from developing any kind of infectious diseases. Many people believe that good hydration keeps the tissues moist and are able to maintain the skin’s elasticity, softness, and coloring, although this has not been research thoroughly.

Temperature - Staying hydrated is important to regulating the overall body temperature by helping dissipate heat. When the body becomes too warm, water is excreting through pores in the skin (sweat) which entails water lost.

For employee education regarding this topic, contact Sharon Rateike, corporate wellness program coordinator at (920) 568-5475 or Sharon.Rateike@forthc.com.

