



Got Water?

We all learned in high school health class that our bodies are mostly water. Therefore, it makes sense that we need to replenish these stores daily. But do you know why? When? How much? Hot or cold? Flavored or plain?

Without adequate water stores your body cannot function properly. You miss out on water-soluble vitamins and minerals that are important to optimal health. Being in a state of dehydration, your muscles won't be able to work as well during activity and recovery after exercise won't be as efficient. Additionally, thirst is often mistaken as hunger, resulting in unnecessary eating. The list goes on and on.

So when do you know when it's time to drink water? Basically, when you're thirsty it's too late. Thirst is a sign of the beginning stages of dehydration. Try to stay on top of it by drinking water with each meal (4-5 each day), 20 oz. pre-exercise, 6 oz for every 20 minutes of exercise, and 20 oz post-exercise. Sticking to those basic rules should keep you hydrated, but continue to listen to your body. There will be some days you require more water and some days less depending on food intake, activity level and sleep.

There are myths as to whether cold water or room temperature water is better for us. Water is water. It is two hydrogen molecules and one oxygen molecule. So if you're drinking it, you're getting the same thing in. However, when water is really cold it steals energy from your body as it warms, which reduces your body's output. Therefore, room temperature water is better for energy purposes.

I understand that plain old water can get boring and tasteless. There are tons of flavored waters and electrolyte replacements on the market. These all have water in them so they count toward the day's intake. However, you have to be careful to stay away from those with high sugar levels and avoid those with artificial sweeteners. If you choose to drink flavored water, it is better to ingest them during workouts or immediately post workout when the body can best use these sugars.

Being mostly water, we need to keep ourselves hydrated. It's best that throughout the day you are consistently taking water. Warm water, cold water, flavored water – just drink it!