

Water

What is this thing we call WATER?

Becoming more mindful of what I put into my body on a daily basis and wanting to make lifestyle changes that fueled me...I had to start looking at how much water I was actually drinking. Believe me. I have not wanted to do that since I LOVE my diet soda!!! I love the taste of them, the fizz, the lime that I add to them and on and on and on.

But, I knew that such a small transformation as simple as deleting sodas from my diet and adding more water was an adjustment that would alter my body in many ways. An adjustment as fundamental as developing a close personal relationship with water.

Water...the necessity of life! Knowing that you can not live more than a few days without water should show us really how important water is to our body!

Okay, so water is good for you! But do I have to really give up that diet soda? Can't I just add water to my drink line-up?

Soft drinks are at best non-nutritious and at worst damaging to your body. They are filled with all kinds of ingredients that can cause abdominal bloating, retention of fluids and ironically, dehydration. For the heck of it, read a soda can and see if you can even pronounce the ingredients. I don't know about you but I have reconsidered putting things into my body that I cannot even pronounce, let alone know what it is. What in the world is gum arabic? Brominated vegetable oil? Phenylalanine? These words all came off the side of a can of diet soda.

If you were a fish, would you rather swim in large, syrupy vats of unpronounced concoctions, or a clear mountain stream? Think of your inner "machinery" as that fish. It was this mind-full realization that I was actually putting this stuff into my body that motivated me to kick my soft-drink habit. I remember the moment vividly; I absentmindedly began reading the ingredients on my can of soda. The more I read, the more horrified I became. Please understand, I am no radical health nut, but I felt grossed out in that moment. I reread the can to confirm that I had read it completely right the first time. That's it! I needed to change this habit!

Participating in the Create Your IDEAL Body program, I am being mindful to what my body is wanting to eat, mindful as I eat, mindful to my surroundings when and where I eat, mindful as I grocery shop and mindful to what I put into my body.

Breaking any detrimental habit whether it's cigarettes, alcohol, soda pop, or some other vice, means living through an uncomfortable adjustment period. If your palate is used to the tingle of soft-drink fizz, or to the distinct flavor of cola, then suddenly switching to water will feel less satisfying. Water in the first few days will be like a non-taste.

It helps to accept that the first two weeks without your habitual substance will not be fun. But after those initial two weeks, your taste buds will begin to discern the quenching, satisfying properties of water as appealing in their own right. More important, your entire

body will begin to feel better. By the third week without sodas your skin will look brighter; your stomach will be flatter, no headaches, lethargy and abdominal discomfort. These differences motivate me to keep chugging water instead of soda pop. How about you? I am now reaching for water, more and more.

People who start consciously drinking more water are often surprised to find that they lose five pounds within the first two weeks or so without doing anything else to lose weight. The reason is that without proper hydration, the body retains fluids. That is right! The less water we drink, the more we retain! To shed the unnecessary weight of retained water, we must drink more water. Plus, drinking ample amounts of water also works as a natural appetite suppressant, so we consume fewer calories.

Drinking water also cleanses and nourishes your body system, helping your kidneys function optimally and ridding your body of waste. A specific side effect of this process that you will notice at first is frequent trips to the bathroom, which will lessen as your body adjusts to processing greater amounts of water. You will also notice less bloating in the abdominal region (especially if you were drinking a lot of sodas), less swelling in your extremities if you have been suffering from fluid retention and you will be more comfortable in your clothes.

Drinking lots of water will give your skin a healthier, more radiant appearance. Recently, a popular talk show featured an anti-aging expert who was offering simple hints for looking younger. His number one tip? Drinking eight glasses of water a day. Drinking sodas and coffee and not enough water, dehydrates your skin making your face look parched, heavily lined and older, as if you'd stayed up all night or out in the sun too long. (If you drink caffeine, you must add an additional glass of water due to the dehydrating properties of caffeine) Water, on the other hand, feeds your skin with much needed hydration, giving skin cells plumpness and resiliency.

Many of my clients experience a profound improvement in their quality of sleep and both the number and severity of headaches when they substitute water for their soda/coffee habit.

How much water is enough?

Most experts recommend drinking eight eight-ounce glasses of water each day. I personally try to drink ten glasses. I have been told to divide your weight (in pounds) in half and then divide that by eight...getting the amount of eight-ounce glasses to drink a day. Example: 180 lbs (person) divided by 2 = 90 divided by 8 = 11.25I would say 11 eight-ounce glasses a day for this individual. Be sure and check with your physician on what he would suggest is a good amount of water for your body.

An Easier Transition:

- Here are a couple soft-drink/coffee substitutions to help ease the way plus increasing your water intake.
- Homemade iced tea with a squeeze of lemon/lime and fresh mint (forget the bottle variety, which has as many artificial ingredients and/or sugar as soda)
- Iced coffee with milk or soy milk, vanilla and/or a bit of sugar or a tiny pinch of stevia.

- Seltzer water with a little cranberry juice or orange juice. When buying the cranberry juice or any other kind of juice for that matter, try finding the unsweetened brand - not the no-sugar-added kind. Such brands contain corn syrup or aspartame. Try Knudsen's, Trader Joe's or Mountain Sun's brand. I am not sure for overseas brands...but let me know so I can be more politically correct!
- Homemade lemonade with fresh peppermint.
- Any 100 percent fruit juice on ice (forget the bottled varieties that are not pure juice).
- Add a squeeze of lemon, lime, orange, grapefruit, a sprig of mint or a cucumber slice to your water. All are very refreshing...hot or cold!

To replace sugar, if you have not tried stevia and need some sweetener added to your drinks, try stevia! It is an herb used for hundreds of years in South America by the Indian tribes in Paraguay. It is 30 times stronger than regular sugar ...so it only takes an itty bit and NO after taste!

Water is probably the most under promoted secrets of healthy-full living and weight loss. It offers our bodies so many benefits. It is such an easy adjustment to make - why not pour you a cool glass of water right now? Ahhh...enjoy!

You'll be on your way to Creating YOUR Ideal Body!!!!

P.S. if you are in to setting intentions or the power of prayer....look at the Miraculous Messages From Water article by The Visionary Research of Masaru Emoto at www.wellnessgoods.com or at www.thefinestsite.com.