

Why Does the Body Need a Healthy Water Balance?

The human body cannot survive without water for more than three days. The water carries out many vital functions in the body:

1. ***Digestion.*** The process of digestion requires digestive juices which have high water content. Healthy human secretes about 700-1,000 milliliters of saliva every day. Saliva is a multipurpose fluid: it facilitates swallowing; lubricates the mouth for fluent speech; keeps the mouth, gums, and teeth clean; and digests the starches in the food. Salivary secretion dries out fast when the water content of the body is low. Finally, drinking water 30-60 minutes before meals and 1-2 hours following the meals helps the digestive tract to break down and digest the food more effectively. Drinking water with meals dilutes the digestive juices; Ayurvedic science of healing discourages the practice.
2. ***Regulation of body temperature.*** Body temperature in the hot and warm environment gets regulated via sweating and breathing. The body temperature can go up to unhealthy levels with reduced sweating from low body water. Adequate hydration with plain water is essential to keep average body temperature in the warm, dry climates.
3. ***Improvement in physical performance.*** Healthy water balance is critical to muscle strength and endurance. During an intense exercise for one hour, an athlete can lose up to 10% body weight in water. Inadequate water intake during intense physical activity or exercise can cause dehydration and muscle cramps (see the section below for signs of dehydration and water/electrolyte needs for physical training).
4. ***Prevention of constipation.*** Adequate hydration with water and natural fiber from plant foods are the key to avoiding constipation.
5. ***Reduction in weight loss.*** Replacing sugary drinks and fruit juices with plain drinking water reduce overall calorie intake. Additionally, water increases thermogenesis, enhancing the body's capacity to burn more calories.
6. ***Helps in prevention and control of specific disease conditions such as:***
 - Exercise-induced asthma
 - Urinary tract infection
 - Kidney stones
 - High blood pressure
7. ***Keeps skin healthy.*** A secret to healthy skin is holistically balanced, mostly plant food and healthy hydration.
8. ***Mood elevation and feeling of wellbeing*** --An adult or child low in water becomes irritable and unhappy. A glass of refreshing water may change the attitude instantly!! 😊