

Hydration



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Hydration CheckPoint Axia College of University of Phoenix Water is the most important nutrient for life; in fact, a person needs more water than any other nutrient to sustain life. An individual could possibly survive for weeks without food, but survival without water would probably only last a few days.

Water plays an important role in regulating the body's temperature, lubricating its joints, and excreting its toxins. In addition, saliva is water and blood mostly consists of water; therefore, water also plays an important role in the digestion process as well as an important role in the transportation of oxygen and other nutrients throughout the body. Since the body cannot store water, water must constantly be consumed.

The amount of water needed by the body varies depending on circumstances such as age, gender, and exercise. For instance, adults need to consume more water than children and men need to consume more water than women; 3.7 liters for men compared to 2.7 liters for women. It is important to note, these are minimum amounts of consumption.

Low calorie diets and diets high in sodium and fiber may require additional water intake. Furthermore, heat, humidity, and strenuous activity will quickly drain the water in a person's body. In such cases, consuming more water than the recommendations is suggested in order to prevent dehydration.

Dehydration occurs when the level of water in the body is so low; the delivery of oxygen and nutrients through the bloodstream becomes impaired.

Dehydration can lead to headaches; fatigue; loss of appetite; and, if left untreated, it can lead to more severe symptoms such as nausea; confusion;

disorientation; and, ultimately, death. In short, preventing dehydration could be as simple as drinking adequate amounts of water. Adequate amounts of the electrolytes sodium, potassium, and chloride are also essential to a healthy life. These nutrients are called electrolytes because of the electrically charged ions they contain. Electrolytes assist the body with muscle contraction, nerve transmission, and fluid balance. Incidentally, too little or too much of any one electrolyte can have severe health consequences.

High-levels of sodium, for example, can lead to chronically high blood-pressure or hypertension. Fortunately, a dietary approach to stop hypertension or a DASH diet can reduce the risk of high-blood pressure and, therefore, reduce the risk of a heart attack or stroke. In addition, reducing the amount of sodium intake while increasing fruit and vegetable consumption, as the DASH diet recommends, can also help to prevent diseases such as osteoporosis, cancer, and diabetes. In general, a correct balance of water and other nutrients is essential to living a healthy life (Grosvenor, M.

B., & Smolin, L. A., 2006). Reference: Grosvenor, M. B., & Smolin, L.

A. (2006). Nutrition: Everyday choices. Hoboken, New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons.