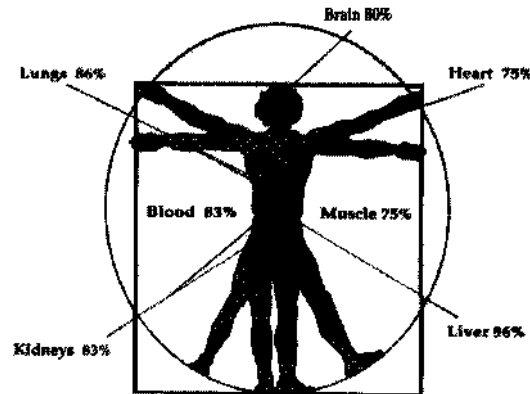


The Importance of Water in Human Health

Steve Meyerowitz (from Water the Ultimate Cure)



We love water. We play in it, spend our leisure time around it, build our most luxurious homes next to it, enjoy some of our favourite sports on it, exercise in it, travel to exotic vacation spots to be near it, cleanse ourselves with it, and visit spas to seek out its healing powers. We cherish our freshwater lakes, streams, reservoirs, and our great oceans. Nearly seventy percent of the earth's surface is covered with water. And, whether it be by coincidence or divine, our human bodies are also nearly seventy percent water and the salinity of our extracellular fluids is also approximately that of ocean water. These three simple atoms, H₂O, are so integral to our existence, that the discovery of it on another celestial body is almost a certain indicator of life.

The therapeutic use of water in all of its forms crosses all cultures and dates back to the beginning of civilization. The Egyptians, Assyrians, Babylonians, Persians, Greeks, Hebrews, Hindus, Chinese, and Native Americans, all used water to heal injury and treat disease. And here is something else to ponder: The water we drink today is the same water that our ancient ancestors drank. It is the same water that Moses lifted to his lips; that was served to Cleopatra, and to George Washington. The way our ecosystem works, the water on the planet continuously recycles. When seawater evaporates, it leaves the salts behind. As the rising water cools, it condenses to form water droplets and clouds which, at the right temperature, drop back to earth (natural distillation). The same molecules of water are merely exchanged between sea and sky and soil and have been doing so for millennia.

The restorative powers of water are so primal that even the sound of water is healing. CD and audio cassettes of recorded rivers and ocean waves and waterfalls are sold everywhere and there are even videos of them. It is easier to fall asleep or to meditate listening to water. Water is also a fantastic stress reducer. A hot bath before bedtime is the universal cure for relieving the stress that causes insomnia. Special water wands can massage you in the shower and tubs with water jets soothe overstressed areas in your neck, back, and shoulders.

Let's face it, we love water because we are water. The average adult contains 40-50 quarts-10-13 gallons of water! Blood is 83% water, muscles 75%, brain 75%, heart 75%, bones 22%, lungs 86%, kidneys 83%, and eyes 95%. If aliens landed tomorrow, they would probably describe us as mobile sacks of water.

What Does Water Do?

Every cell in every living thing, whether plants or people, contains a nutrient fluid that is mostly water. Every cell is also floating around other cells in an "extracellular" sea of saline water. If the water table for either of these fluids is even slightly under, it is like farmland that is under-irrigated. True, most vegetables will still grow, but they are not in their prime and there are areas of decay. Just look at dry skin to get an idea of what's going on when it's too dry inside you. Where you see skin,

there are shrivelled cells. It is like parched soil, only in people, it is one step closer to mummification. You cannot see dehydration, but it is crucial you do not ignore it.

These extracellular fluids carry the electric charges that enable the cells to communicate with each other. They transport food (nutrients), deliver oxygen, and remove the bad stuff-waste products and toxins. They regulate temperature and prevent sticking. On a larger scale this extracellular fluid acts

Functions of Water in the Human Body

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Improves oxygen delivery to the cells | <input type="checkbox"/> Removes wastes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Transports nutrients | <input type="checkbox"/> Flushes toxins |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Enables cellular hydration | <input type="checkbox"/> Prevents tissues from sticking |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Moistens oxygen for easier breathing | <input type="checkbox"/> Lubricates joints |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cushions bones and joints | <input type="checkbox"/> Improves cell to cell communications |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Absorbs shocks to joints and organs | <input type="checkbox"/> Maintains normal electrical properties of cells |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Regulates body temperature | <input type="checkbox"/> Empowers the body's natural healing process |

as a lubricant and even a cushion for joints and bones. It acts as a shock absorber for organs and glands. It quenches free radicals by binding to them and is crucial to the body's overall capacity to repair, restore, and heal.

The Dehydration Epidemic

What America Drinks

Servings per day in order of quantity

- | | |
|----------------------------|--|
| . Water - 4.6 | . Tea-1 |
| . Coffee - 1.8 | . Soda without caffeine-0.6 |
| . Milk - 1.3 | . Beer - 0.5 |
| . Juices - 1.4 | . Wine or other alcoholic beverage - 0.3 |
| . Soda with caffeine - 1.3 | |

Your body is approximately 67% water by weight. If your body's water content drops by as little as 2%, you will feel fatigued. If it drops by 10%, you will experience significant health problems. Losses greater than that can be fatal. Still, Americans don't drink enough water. In a survey of 3,003 persons in 15 major American cities, participants reported drinking an overall average of only 4.6 eight-ounce servings of water per day compared to the recommended eight servings per day. Forty-four percent said they drank three or less servings per day. Nearly 10% said they didn't drink water at all. Thirty-five percent of Americans are unaware of the number of recommended daily water servings. The survey clearly demonstrates the need for much more public education about the benefits of adequate hydration. The lack of information about proper hydration is worrisome because even minor dehydration can cause problems. Hydration is fast becoming a public health issue that demands greater attention.

The 10 Commandments of Good Hydration

1. Drink ½ ounce daily for every pound you weigh. A 150lb person drinks 75 ounces, or approximately 2.5 quarts. One glass every hour is a good rule of thumb.
2. Avoid diuretic beverages that flush water out of your body, such as caffeinated coffee, tea, soda pop, alcohol or beer.
3. Drink more water and fresh juices to maintain hydration during illness and upon recovery. Illness robs your body of water.
4. Start your day with ½ to 1 quart of water to flush your digestive tract and rehydrate your system from the overnight fast.
5. Drink water at regular intervals throughout the day. Don't wait until you're thirsty. Thirst indicates

an already present deficiency.

6. Get in the habit of carrying a water bottle with you or keep one in the car or on your desk. Convenience helps. Stuff it in your shoulder bag or waist pack water bottle pocket. Hiking suppliers have a nice selection of water-bearing belt packs and accessories.
7. Make a habit of drinking water. According to a survey, the reason most people don't drink as much as they know they ought to, is lack of time or being too busy. Decide to drink water before every meal. Set objectives for yourself such as drinking before you leave the house, and first thing upon your return, or before you start work. Take water breaks instead of coffee breaks. Fill a size glass you can finish or gauge yourself by the number of water bottles you drink during the day.
8. Increase your drinking when you increase your mental activity level; your stress level; your exercise level.
9. Drink the purest water available.
10. Perspire. Exercise to the point of perspiration or enjoy a steam bath. Sweat cleans the lymphatic system and bloodstream. It is one of the best detoxification avenues available to us. Do sweat and do drink plenty of water afterwards to replace the loss of fluids. Drink more in hot weather.

Hydration vs. Dehydration

Although Americans drink many liquids, a significant proportion of those fluids are actually dehydrating. We consume 7.9 servings of hydrating beverages each day, but we also drink 4.9 servings of dehydrating beverages, resulting in a net gain of only three hydrating beverages per day. The hydrating and dehydrating drinks cancel each other out. Tap water, bottled water, juice, milk, and carbonated soda without caffeine are all hydrating beverages. Coffee, tea, carbonated soda with caffeine, beer, wine, and other alcoholic drinks are diuretics, meaning they increase the discharge of fluids.

Significant numbers of Americans know little about dehydration. Twenty percent are unaware that coffee and beer are dehydrating. The popularity of bottled water is undermined by the 5 daily servings of diuretic caffeine and alcohol. Once we sum up the total of hydrating and dehydrating beverages, Americans come up dry.

Caffeinated soft drinks are a major offender. Carbonated soft drinks account for more than 27 percent of beverage consumption in the U.S. The average adult American drinks 54.5 gallons of soft drinks per year. In 1997, Americans spent over \$54 billion buying soft drinks. For every 16-ounce bottle of water consumed, Americans drank the equivalent of 64 ounces of soda. Carbonated drinks are also the single biggest source of refined sugars in the American diet. It is not much more than liquid candy and 24% of the sodas sold are artificially sweetened. In 1999, the fastest growing soft drink was *Mountain Dew*, which is the brand with the highest caffeine content. We need to look at caffeine for what it really is—a widely used, mildly addictive, psychoactive drug. In large quantity, it can cause restlessness, insomnia, or irregular heartbeat, not to mention disqualification from the Olympics.

What is dehydration? Most people think dehydration is something you get from heat exhaustion. This is when your output of water exceeds your intake. This and dry mouth are the extreme cases. Hidden dehydration is when there is not an adequate amount of water reaching the cells. This mild dehydration can lead to dizziness, lethargy, headache, muscle cramps, loss of appetite, depression and mental fuzziness. We lose water every day through urine, skin (perspiration), faeces, and lungs (moist gases). But we also increase our excretion of water by drinking alcohol, beer, coffee, tea, caffeinated cola drinks, and taking some drugs. All are diuretics. Americans drink an average of two cans of soft drinks and two cups of coffee daily. Throw in a few beers in the evening and we are begging for the symptoms of hidden dehydration. Alternatives exist. Instead of taking coffee each morning in order to wake up, try splashing cold water on your face. It is a healthier and more effective wake-up.

Perspiration-Natural Air Conditioning

We lose approximately 2-3 quarts of water every day through the normal vapour exchange through our skin, otherwise known as perspiration. Perspiration is the air conditioning of the body. Without it, we would overheat! You don't have to come off an arduous tennis match to sweat. Perspiration happens even for white collar workers. (Just look at the sales of underarm deodorants.) But that two quarts climbs up to three or four quarts should you play that game of tennis or engage in any other exercise or sport. Those 10-12 cups of water we lose daily need to be replaced to maintain a healthy fluid balance.

How Much to Drink?

You know the food pyramid. It is the chart designed by the National Institute of Health that prioritizes the foods we should eat. The pyramid was redesigned in the 1990s placing fruits and vegetables at the base. Here is a prediction. The next redesign will have eight glasses of water at the pyramid's foundation.

The average adult should drink from 2-3½ quarts of high quality, pure water daily. But the actual amount needs to be customized. It depends on body size, climate, temperature, humidity, altitude of your region, and your exercise level. Even mental activity, stress, and the environment are factors. When you are sick and have a fever, you need more water. Athletes lose fluids fastest. Runners, cyclists, marathoners, etc. should drink before, during, and after their sport. A tennis player who perspires heavily during his game, should drink a pint of water before, during, and after the game. One guide is to take your weight and divide it in half. The resulting number is the amount of ounces you should drink. Thus, a 200 lb person should drink 100 ounces of water daily. If you are drinking an adequate amount, your urine colour and odour will be neutral. Don't want to carry around a measuring cup? Just drink from water bottles. Four half-litre water bottles is approximately two quarts (or 2 litres). Finish all by the end of the day. By the way, one sip is one ounce.

What and When to Drink

Do other liquids count as water? Fresh squeezed fruit and vegetable juices are the best alternative to water. Bottled juices are next best. Keep in mind that bottled fruit juices such as apple and orange juice contain large amounts of sugar and that excess sugar causes problems. Non-caffeinated, herbal teas are also an excellent source of water-peppermint, chamomile, liquorice, etc. Milks and non-dairy milks such as soy, oat, and rice milks also contribute to your total water intake. Fresh fruits and vegetables also provide water. Diuretic beverages such as alcohol, coffee and caffeinated teas, and soft drinks, do not count. They have the opposite effect of drawing water out of the body.

If we assume the average person needs to imbibe four half litres of water daily (about 2 quarts), then here is one possible way to break it up. Drink one half litre in the morning before breakfast. This is a great flush of your intestines and helps prepare the stomach for food and avoids constipation. Next take another half litre before lunch, another before dinner, and finally another by bedtime. Always drink before meals (15-20 minutes before) or 1-3 hours after meals. Too much water during a meal dilutes your digestive enzymes. Too much water on a full stomach flushes the stomach contents before digestion is complete. If water is not conveniently available between meals, eat fresh fruit. Don't wait until you are thirsty to have a drink. By the time your body signals for more water, you are already behind in your water needs. Drink extra on airplanes where the atmosphere is as dry as a desert. Water also reportedly reduces the severity of jet lag.

Essentials of Rehydration

1. Drink enough to equal 1/2 your body weight in ounces, daily. Thus, if you weigh 200 lbs, drink 100 ounces.
2. Use 1/4 tsp. of sea salt for every quart of water you drink. Use salt generously with food, as long as you drink enough water.

- Avoid diuretics, such as caffeinated or alcoholic drinks. Every six oz. of caffeine or alcohol requires an additional 10 to 12 oz. of water to rehydrate you.

Keep water handy. Insulated quart size cups and belt packs with water bottle holders are available in sports stores. Avoid drinking ice water. Your body has to produce more heat to neutralize those icy temperatures. Ice cold temperatures shock the stomach during which time it cannot secrete enzymes. Cold water is fine; it is cooling, especially to an overheated body, but ice water, because of its extreme temperature, is undesirable.

Sodium and Potassium

Sodium is arguably the most important mineral in the body. The extracellular fluid is a saline solution. Salt is necessary to maintain normal osmotic pressure for the transport of nutrients and waste to and from the cells. It also facilitates hydroelectric activity (communications) from cell to cell. Salt retains water and thus is a buffer against dehydration. Sodium also enables ATP generation. ATP supplies energy to cells and muscles. Athletes who push their bodies longer than five hours, especially in hot weather, run the risk of using up their sodium and their water before anything else.

In 1982, Alberto Salazar won the Boston Marathon and proceeded immediately to the emergency room at Boston Hospital to receive six litres of intravenous solution to replenish his lost water and salt. Why? He overheated. These marathoners demonstrate the basic daily requirements of the human body that are normally invisible to us. In a study of 64 athletes at an iron man race lasting between 9 and 15 hours, 27 percent were hyponatremic (salt deficient) and 17 percent of them needed medical attention. This suggests that athletes should aim for 80 to 100 mg sodium per quart of water.

"Chronic cellular dehydration of the body is the primary etiology of painful, degenerative diseases."
-F. Batmanghelidj, M.D

Potassium is mostly present in intracellular fluid. Its main role is the regulation of total body water and stabilizing muscle contractions. This is the key mineral that is lost through sweat and urine. In a study of athletes running 40 minutes at 70 degrees Fahrenheit, potassium loss was estimated at 435 mg/hour or 200 mg per kg of weight lost. Supplementing with potassium during exercise increases muscle hydration.

Dr. Batmanghelidj and Salt

Dr. F. Batmanghelidj is the world's leading hydration crusader. His book, *Your Body's Many Cries for Water*⁹ affixes the blame for a host of modern ailments on the lack of proper hydration. In his theory, water and salt follow oxygen as the most crucial ingredients for life. Proper hydration can reverse and improve a wide range of health problems such as allergies, asthma, hypertension, cholesterol, premature aging, Alzheimer's, back pain, migraine headaches, obesity, and depression. A medical doctor himself, Batmanghelidj reminds us that one of the first protocols for a patient upon hospitalization is an intravenous saline solution. Doctors are well aware that dehydration, second only to oxygen deprivation, robs life fastest. Minor dehydration-not enough to kill-is both the result and the hidden cause of many illnesses. The inverse is also true. Good hydration is at the foundation of good health. Drink up now, because the price for administering an intravenous saline water solution in the hospital is approximately \$350.

Early Signs of Dehydration	Mature Signals of Dehydration	Signs of Emergency Dehydration
Fatigue Anxiety Irritability Depression Cravings Cramps Headache	Heartburn Joint and back pain Migraine Headaches Fibromyalgia Constipation/colitis Anginal pain	Asthma and Allergies Old Age Diabetes Hypertension Autoimmune Diseases Lupus, Psoriasis, etc.

From Dr. Batmanghelidj's perspective, most so-called incurable diseases are nothing more than disease labels given to various stages of drought. Americans diligently check the fluids in their cars, but neglect the fluids in their bodies. In a car, oil prevents metal from rubbing up against metal. In the body, water keeps cartilage robust and joints floating. Once dehydration sets in, cartilage thins and fails to buffer the joints and bone rubs against bone causing arthritic pain. But doctors are not taught to check the water and salt levels. Instead they treat the complaint with painkillers that mask the body's alert signals. Painkillers treat the effect, not the cause, and eventually surgeons shave off some bone to create more float in the joint or replace the joint altogether. Taking a pain killer in this instance is like cutting the wires to stop the oil light in your car from flashing. If auto mechanics used the same logic as mainstream medicine, they would never check the fluids and when things wore out, they would simply install replacement parts.

There are two kinds of water in the body: Intracellular and extracellular-inside the cells and surrounding the cells. To the degree that water can reach every cell, the cell can be regularly cleansed and the waste products of normal cell metabolism can be carried away. Once inside the cells, the water is held there by potassium. Batmanghelidj says there are two oceans of water in the body, intracellular and extracellular. The saline content of the water outside the cells is said to be similar to the saline content of the ocean. Good health depends on maintaining the balance between these two internal oceans. The balance is achieved by regular intake of water, potassium from the diet, and salt. When there is insufficient water to reach the cells, they draw upon the extracellular water. This is the first stage of dehydration. It is also the cause of oedema because the brain commands an increase in salt in order to retain more water. When the shortage of water reaches a more critical level, the body increases the osmotic pressure in order to deliver more water to the cells. This is a cause of hypertension.

*Within the three months that I have been drinking the right amount of water the right way, my chronic mucous began to leave, my hair became soft, and my skin is becoming softer. I have fewer wrinkles (I am almost 70 years old). My stomachaches stopped. My toenails are not brittle. Two black spots I have had on my leg from several years ago as an aftermath of deep cuts have disappeared. My eyebrows grew back. There are dark streaks showing in my grey hair. My hair is coming in thicker and my memory is improving. -Ann Louise Gittleman, author *Guess What Came to Dinner*.*

Increasing the intake of your water must be slow and spaced out until there is a corresponding excretion of urine. When the urine is clear, it indicates we are drinking adequate amounts of water. Salt is also lost in the urine which helps get rid of oedema.

Water is arguably our best diuretic. For years mainstream medicine has preached the avoidance of salt because it promotes high blood pressure and salt has become taboo. But this boomerang reaction of avoiding salt can backfire on our health. The proper proportion of salt to water, 1/4 teaspoon per quart of water, is necessary to maintain proper hydration and to generate hydroelectric energy needed for cell to cell communication-the spark of life. If your weight suddenly increases, you are taking too much salt. The cure? Drink more water.

To learn more about salt, water, and potassium and how to balance them to treat autoimmune diseases such as lupus, chronic fatigue, psoriasis, etc., and allergies, asthma, oedema, hypertension, and other diseases, see Dr. Batmanghelidj's books listed in the resource chapter.

After only four days of drinking eight glasses of water, eight year old Jeremy's asthma cleared up to the extent that he was able to discontinue all of his medications. Within one month his lung capacity increased from 60% of normal to 120%. Arthritis, ulcers, oedema, even blood pressure-I've seen them all improve with water.

-Julian Whitaker, M.D., editor Health & Healing Newsletter

Asthma, Allergies, and Dehydration

Asthma is the constriction of the air sacs in the lungs. Histamine is an important neurotransmitter that regulates the body's thirst mechanism and water intake. In a condition of dehydration, histamine production increases, which in turn swells the body tissues, including the small sacs of the lungs. This constricts the airflow causing the telltale shortness of breath experienced in asthma. Allergies and asthma cause histamine to be released because histamine is part of the body's immune response. Dehydration would ordinarily cause dryness in the membranes of the nose and eyes, but histamine and its subordinate chemicals increase the distribution of water to those organs.

Today there are more than 25 different anti-histamine drugs available for treating asthma and allergies. However, according to Batmanghelidj, dehydration is one of the causes of histamine release. In fact, the inverse is also true, water and salt are two very strong, natural anti-histamines. For an asthma or allergy attack, he recommends drinking 3-4 glasses of water followed by a few grains of salt on the tongue. As a preventative, the asthma and allergy patient should force themselves to drink the recommended amount of water daily to avoid excessive histamine release.

Cancer Protection from Water?

It is a little known fact, but insufficient water consumption is actually a risk factor for getting colon, breast, and urinary tract cancers such as cancers of the kidneys, bladder, prostate, and testicles. When the body is well hydrated, blood circulation is expanded and immune system cells can reach the cancerous tissues in greater numbers. Statistical studies indicate that cancer victims drink precious little of the wet stuff. On the other hand, women who drink more than five glasses of water per day actually reduce their chance of getting kidney and bladder cancer by 45 percent. Men reduce their chances of contracting prostate and testicle cancer by 32 percent. How can this be? The theory is that water flushes toxins from the body before they can do their damage or be reabsorbed. In one study, female water drinkers reduced their risk of developing breast cancer by 79%. One interpreter of the study, water expert Dr. Susan M. Kleiner, postulates that "possibly maintaining a dilute solution within the cells reduces the potency of oestrogen and its ability to cause hormone-related cancer.

Kidney stones affect approximately 15% of the population and kidney stone manufacture can be another side effect of insufficient water consumption. One study reported that individuals with a history of kidney stones reduced their reoccurrence by as much as 15% just by increasing their water intake to 4 or more glasses per day. Lack of water promotes the formation of the stones by concentrating the calcium salts inside the kidneys.

Lose Weight with Water

How Much Water for How Much Food?			
<i>More than 80% of the water consumed in the US goes to animals and agriculture. Below is the number of gallons it takes to deliver a serving of the following foods to your dinner table.</i>			
2,607 gallons	Steak	26 gallons	Dinner Roll
408 gallons	Chicken	12 gallons	Baked Potato
100 gallons	Pat of butter		

Are you thirsty or hungry? It is possible that we are interpreting our signs of thirst for hunger. Food is a major source of water and about one third of our daily water intake comes from foods. Raw fruits and vegetables are 70% to 95% water. Even bread is 35% water. So it is possible that your desire for food is a hidden desire for water. Try not eating between meals. Reach for the water bottle instead of the ice cream. Once you fill up on water, it creates a satiety, a feeling of fullness. Then get busy with something. Chances are your mind will be off your stomach; you will feel full, and your hunger will disappear. Repeat this daily and you will save calories and shed pounds. Sometimes hunger masquerades as thirst.

The Fountain of Youth

According to legend, the fountain of youth is a spring of water located on a Bahamian island. This is the spring for which Ponce de Leon earnestly searched. This island, surrounded by its green ocean, blue sky, and pristine air, is in itself a healing experience. But drinking its healing waters was purported to rejuvenate the drinker. All around the earth, one can find healing waters, from steam baths to mineral spas, to geysers and springs, these waters are some of the most special places on earth. The stuff that comes out is truly God's liquid.

Can water keep you young? There is a theory that cells are immortal and just the fluids in and around them degenerates over time. If you subscribe to this theory, then replenishing them with adequate amounts of the highest quality water is the simplest and most sublime way to stave off the process of aging. The stooping of older people, their dry wrinkled skin, and brittle bones all point to a dehydrated condition. But this condition did not occur overnight. This dehydration, as well as that of other illnesses, is a chronic condition that accumulates for years until your "thirst" manifests itself in pain. Water is the most important element in your body. Your cells cannot function without it. Low level dehydration can be both perfectly hidden and managed. The body simply adapts to a state of drought. But this condition manifests many long-term illnesses, which shorten our lives and eventually cripple our health.

"The cell is immortal. It is merely the fluid in which it floats that degenerates. "

-Dr. Alexis Carrel, French-born American surgeon and biologist and winner of the 1912 Nobel Prize

Hydrotherapy -The Curative Powers of Water

While water cannot be described as a magic potion, it has enormous curative powers. Anyone who has ever visited a Roman bath, a steam bath, or jumped into a jacuzzi or a whirlpool knows the power of water. Mud baths, sitz baths, mineral salt baths, enemas, douches, even swims in the ocean are healing and invigorating. Witness the yearly pilgrimage of millions of people who flock to the Dead Sea to swim in its healing, highly saline waters.

Therapeutically, hot water soothes and relaxes the body, and because it releases tension in the nerves, it can have reflexive action to nearly every organ of the body. Dry heat is simply not as penetrating as wet heat. According to Dr. Douglas Lewis, N.D., Chairperson of Physical Medicine at the Bastyr College Natural Health Clinic in Seattle, Washington, external applications of hot water work because they produce "a response that stimulates the immune system and cause white cells to migrate out of the blood vessels and into the tissues where they clean up toxins and assist the body in eliminating wastes." Cold water discourages inflammation by constricting blood vessels (vasoconstriction), and reduces inflammatory agents such as histamine. Dr. Lewis cautions that short cold water treatment may actually increase fever and only long cold water treatment pulls heat from the body for fever reduction.

Hydrotherapy is not just alternative medicine. Mainstream orthopaedists already recommend water therapy after hip, knee, and joint surgery and the first thing any doctor recommends after injury is ice. Underwater movement relieves stress on joints and also has aerobic benefits. Runners sometimes practice running underwater. Cold water also enhances muscle tone. And there are numerous cardiovascular and muscular benefits to underwater exercises because of its inherent resistance.

Alternating between hot and cold water reduces inflammation and congestion, and stimulates the adrenals and endocrine glands. According to Leon Chaitow, N.D., D.O., of London, England, hot and cold water therapy improves circulation, especially to the digestive areas, and improves the detoxifying capacity of the liver. So, next time you have a tummy ache, resist reaching for the Digel or Tums. Place a hot water bottle on the stomach and rest. When you are fatigued, just slide into a hot bath. External hydrotherapy is safe, natural, inexpensive, and an effective home treatment for many common health conditions that can keep the doctor away.
