

WATER – The lifeblood of the human body

We all need water to live. Humans can survive a month without food, but only a week without water. Why is water so healthy for us?

Every cell from the simplest to the most complicated one is made up mostly of water. This includes the human body. Exactly how much water you are made up of depends on your age. Babies' bodies contain about 78% water. This reduces to 65% in your average one-year-old. Men's bodies contain more water than women's bodies (60% compared to 55%).

“Children need about 1,5 litres of water a day, while adults need between two and three litres a day (the more your body weight, the more water you need).”

Different parts of our bodies contain varying percentages of water. Our brains, our most important organ, are

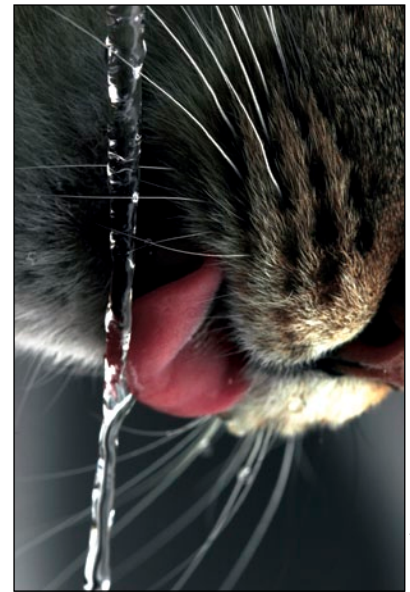
composed of about 70% water, our blood more than 80% and our lungs and liver about 90%. Even our bones are more than 20% water!

Since the human body is made primarily of water, it is essential that we consume enough fluids on a daily basis to avoid dehydration. Human bodies are perfectly designed and engineered to operate off fuel. This fuel is the food we eat, and the liquids we consume.

We need lots of water to keep our bodies functioning optimally, and keep us healthy. Children need about 1,5 litres of water a day, while adults need between two and three litres a day (the more your body weight, the more water you need).

THE IMPORTANCE OF WATER TO HUMAN HEALTH

We take in most of our water by drinking, but most solid foods also contain water. The unique properties of water



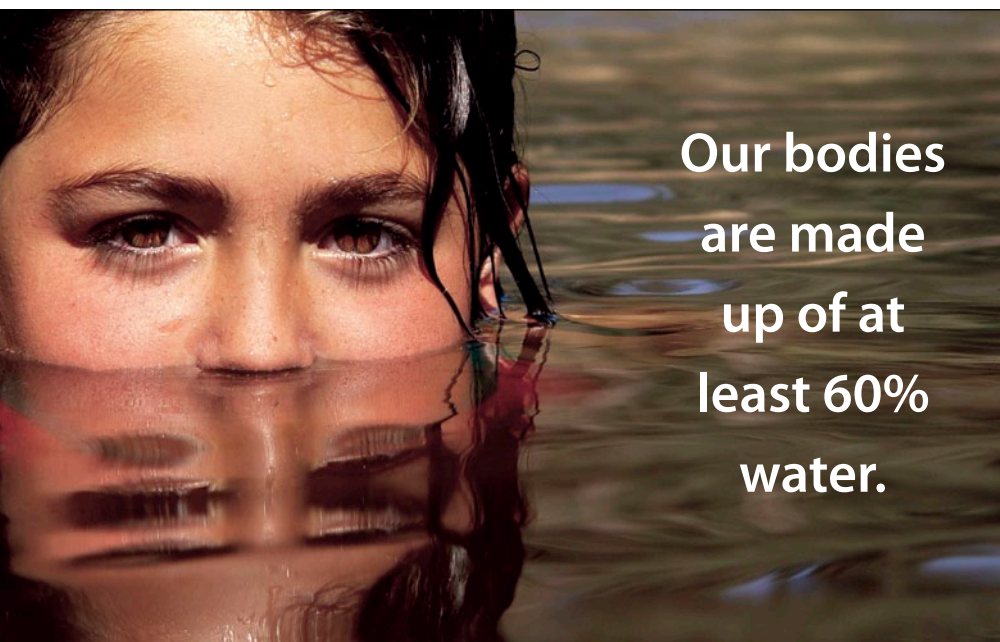
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All living creatures require water to survive.

are what make it so basic and essential to life. One of the most important things water does is to help us digest our food. The excellent ability of water to dissolve many substances allows our cells to use valuable nutrients, mineral and chemicals in biological processes. Water also assists in other essential functions, like bathing the cells and tissues, carrying oxygen around the body; helping to cleanse the blood as it passes through the kidneys; and helping to remove carbon dioxide and waste products.

Water is also responsible for regulating body temperature. If your temperature becomes too high (when, for example, you are outside during a hot day) water stored in the body is used to bring the temperature back to a normal level. If you do not consume enough water, this natural temperature regulation cannot occur.

But all of this water does not stay in our bodies forever. In fact, the human body loses about 1,6 litres of water a



**Our bodies
are made
up of at
least 60%
water.**

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Left: Drinking water moisturises our skins from the inside out.
Above: Water is an essential part of our everyday lives.



DID YOU KNOW?

- 💧 A tomato is 93% water
- 💧 Spinach is 92% water
- 💧 A watermelon is 92% water
- 💧 Cabbage is 90% water
- 💧 Milk is 90% water
- 💧 Carrots are 87% water
- 💧 A pineapple is 85% water
- 💧 Apples are 85% water
- 💧 Potatoes are 80% water
- 💧 Grapes are 80% water
- 💧 A living tree is 75% water
- 💧 A banana is 74% water
- 💧 A chicken is 70% water
- 💧 Beef is 61%
- 💧 Hot dogs are 56% water.
- 💧 Bread is 35% water

day through urine (1,2 litres); breath and sweat (0,2 litres) and faeces (0,2 litres). Remember, you will lose more water if it is hot or if you are exercising.

When you do not drink enough water, your body can become dehydrated.

When we become dehydrated, the body instinctively begins to ration water to each organ. The brain, being the most important organ, gets the most water. The skin, being the least important, is rationed the least amount of water.

TEN GOOD REASONS TO DRINK WATER

- ◆ It reduces your risk of a heart attack.
- ◆ Dehydration can cause impaired concentration, headaches, irritability and fatigue.
- ◆ Water can prevent kidney stones and reduce your chances of bladder infections, kidney and urinary tract infections.
- ◆ Perspiration is your body's natural air-conditioning mechanism. And to sweat you need plenty of water.
- ◆ Water makes up a large part of the fluid that lubricates and cushions your joints and muscles.
- ◆ Water helps constipation by adding fluid to the colon and bulk to stools.
- ◆ Water helps you get better when you are ill by helping to control a fever, by replacing lost fluids and thinning out mucus.
- ◆ Drinking water moisturises your skin from the inside out and helps your skin to maintain its elasticity and suppleness.
- ◆ Water will keep your body systems, including metabolism and digestion, working properly and give you the energy (and hydration) necessary for exercise.
- ◆ By helping to flush out toxins, appropriate water intake lessens the burden on your kidneys and liver.