

6 Reasons Drinking Water Solves Any Problem

The benefits of water go way beyond hydrating. Scientifically speaking, water is the basis of life, but beyond being essential to your very existence, water serves all sorts of purposes that help you feel your absolute best. No, it can't cure cancer (though it may help prevent it), pay your rent (though it does save you money) or take out the trash, but here are six reasons H₂O can help solve many annoying day-to-day health issues and possibly prevent a few big ones - from headaches to those last few pounds.



1. It boosts metabolism: Trying to lose weight? Drinking water can boost your body's ability to burn fat. A study published in the *Journal of Clinical Endocrinology and Metabolism* found that drinking water (about 17oz) increases metabolic rate by 30 percent in healthy men and women. The boost occurred within 10 minutes but reached a maximum 30-40 minutes after drinking.

Studies also suggest that drinking one or two glasses of water before a meal can fill you up so you naturally eat less, says Andrea N. Giancoli, MPH, RD spokesperson for The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. Plus, even mild dehydration will slow down metabolism by as much as 3 percent.

2. It safeguards your heart: Speaking of essential for life...drinking a good amount of water could lower your risk of a heart attack. A six-year study published in the *American Journal of Epidemiology* found that people who drank more than five glasses of water a day were 41 percent less likely to die from a heart attack during the study period than those who drank less than two glasses. Bonus: Drinking all that water may reduce cancer risk as well. Research shows that staying hydrated can reduce risk of colon cancer by 45 percent, bladder cancer by 50 percent,

and possibly reduce breast cancer risk too.

3. It prevents headaches: The most debilitating kind as well: Migraines. In one study published in the journal *Neurology*, scientists recruited migraine sufferers and divided them into two groups: one took a placebo, the others were told to drink 1.5 liters of water (about six cups) in addition to their usual daily intake. At the end of two weeks, the water group had experienced 21 fewer hours of pain than those in the placebo group, as well as a decrease in pain intensity.

4. It boosts brainpower: Your brain needs a lot of oxygen to function at optimum levels, so drinking plenty of water ensures that it's getting all it needs. In fact, drinking eight to 10 cups of water per day can improve your levels of cognitive performance by as much as 30 percent.

The door swings both ways: Research shows that a dehydration level of just 1 percent of your body weight reduces thinking functions, so staying well-hydrated is super important for your mental performance.

5. It makes you rich: Making water your go-to drink saves a lot of money in the long run. Even though 60 percent of the U.S. population buys bottled water, it's still cheaper, on average, than juices, sodas, and Starbucks- especially when you buy it by the case. What's even cheaper: buying a filter and drinking water out of the tap. To put it in perspective, replacing your daily can of soda at lunch with a free-from-the-tap glass of water (or water cooler if you have access to one) can save you about \$180 a year.

6. It keeps you alert at work: Dehydration is the single most common cause of daytime fatigue, so if your afternoon slump is more like a desperate need for an afternoon nap, guzzle a glass of water. It can also make you better at your job, or at least prevent you from being bad at a it - just a two percent dehydration level can trigger short-term memory problems and difficulty focusing on a computer screen or printed page.

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