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What are you trying to do for fitness?

The Most Important Supplement for a Better You

The supplement industry is a \$5 Billion industry, according to the 2002 National Economic Census, trying to sell you the very next product. Of course the manufacturer believes every product is the very best one, but which one really is the most important – could it be as simple as water?

If we look at how our body is made up, water makes up 60% of our bodyweight and is 75% of our muscles. And water does a large number of functions in the body, including:

- Water is the main lubricant in joint spaces and helps prevent arthritis and back pain
- Water increases efficiency of the immune system
- Water prevents clogging of arteries in the heart and brain, reducing risk of heart attack and stroke
- Water is directly connected to brain function and needed for efficient manufacture of neurotransmitters
- Water helps prevent memory loss as we age, reducing the risk of degenerative diseases
- Water affects our appearance, making our skin smoother and giving luster

Yes, water just might be the most important supplement you ever consume – you can't live without it!

So next time before you think about hitting up the supplement store and/or doctor, consider how much water you are consuming. But could water really decrease back pain when you wake up?

Think of how your body works – your body rations the water it has when dehydrated to support the most important areas like the brain, heart and lungs first, then the rest of the body. So if you are in a state of mild dehydration, the body will pull the water from the facet joints, disks, muscles and connective tissue to support the important organs. As a result, the cartilage or shock absorber, which is made of 80% water is not as resilient and ages quicker – think of bouncing a deflated ball.

While there is no RDA for water intake, in 2004 the Adequate Intake recommendations for adult men and women were set at 3.7 and 2.7 liters per day, respectively. All sources can contribute to total water intake, such as water, tea, coffee, etc – while it was once thought that coffee or tea were a diuretic, because the amount of fluid that is gained is higher than that lost, these can be used. But remember that some beverages can contain empty calories that contribute to weight gain if not careful. In addition, some fluids can be acquired thru food (~20%).

Before buying the next big supplement, consider the most important supplement – Water!

<http://www.census.gov/>

Batmanghelidji, F. *Water for health, for healing, for life*. Grand Central Publishing. June, 2003

Dietary Reference Intakes for Water, Potassium, Sodium, Chloride, and Sulfate. This reports may be accessed via www.nap.edu.