

## 22nd March is World Water day: Why is it such an important cause?

When it comes to survival, water is right up there after oxygen. In fact, we can live longer without food than we can without water. Most of us probably know that, so why do we need an internationally observed day to remind us that water is important.

World Water Day was recommended at the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in Rio de Janeiro, to highlight the need to conserve freshwater resources and to manage them sustainably. Even today, a large part of the world's population does not have access to safe, clean water.

- 1 million people die each year due to lack of clean water  
Every 90 seconds, a child dies of a water related disease
- 1 in 9 people lack access to safe water
- In developing countries, 80% of illnesses are traced to poor water sanitation conditions
- Half of the world's hospital beds are occupied by patients with water related diseases
- In some parts of the world, women and young girls, spend up to 6 hours every day collecting water
- Half the world's primary schools do not have water and sanitation facilities. Without toilets, girls tend to drop out at puberty
- **95% of the water used every day is wasted**



Clean, safe, healthy water is a basic human right, but unfortunately, it is still a privilege with rural and marginalized communities often having little to no access. It is important to understand the need to protect our water resources and to use water responsibly. After all, water is important to stay healthy, and for our bodies to carry out some of its most important functions.

### HERE ARE 6 WAYS THAT WATER KEEPS US HEALTHY AND FIT

#### 1. It boosts our metabolism

A German study found that drinking cold water (about 6 cups everyday) can boost your resting metabolism to 50 more calories burned. The theory is that your body uses extra energy to make the cold water warmer.

## **2. It helps us eat smaller portions**

Drinking water makes us feel full. Studies found that drinking two glasses of water immediately before meals helps eat 22% less than without.

## **3. Is a natural, cheap detox**

We love to splurge on all those green, healthy-looking detoxes, that are so trendy nowadays but have you ever tried drinking 8 glasses of water instead? The most important way our bodies get rid of toxins is through urinating. Our kidneys filter our blood to remove toxic by-products of metabolism, but the only way they can do that, is if they have enough water to wash it all out.

## **4. Is key to temperature regulation**

One of the most dangerous things that can happen to our bodies in high temperatures is dehydration. When it is hot, we sweat. Perspiration is the human body's natural mechanism to stay cool. When we sweat, the water excreted by our skin uses our body heat to evaporate. If we do not drink enough water, eventually we stop sweating and our body rapidly heats up, leading to heat exhaustion or heat stroke.

## **5. Is important for cushioning the joints**

Our joints are made of cartilage, and cartilage is 80% water. When we are dehydrated, our body sucks water from cartilage; making our joints less flexible and might even decrease our range of motion. Not only that, our joint surfaces are lubricated with a fluid, which also needs water to ensure smooth mobility.



## **6. It might actually even help headaches**

Dehydration causes the brain to shrink and pull away from the surrounding tissue, which can cause a headache. A dehydration headache can be mild but can even be as bad a migraine. Replenishing the body's water reserves with 1 to 3 glasses of water will make the brain cells swell back to normal and the headache will start to subside.

However, frequent headaches can often be a sign of a serious problem and should always be investigated by a doctor.