

## ARTICLE: Water-Wise: Are you thirsty?

### Why is water important?

We are dependent on the fluid flow through the many different systems in our bodies. Every living cell requires water, just as it does nutrients and oxygen. We are not talking about tea, coffee, soft drinks etc here. Just water. Water acts as a solvent in the body, and the purer it is, free from minerals, softeners and pollutants, the more body toxins can be eliminated and the more nutrients can be carried to the body cells.

### Are you sick or is your body just thirsty?

Too often when we are thirsty we drink liquids like tea, coffee and colas, and our body's need to drink water is neglected. This leads to dehydration and many health problems such as heartburn, headaches and back pain to name just a few.

The thirsty signals...

- When the human body doesn't have enough water it uses a variety of sophisticated indicators to let you know it is thirsty. Typically the only signal we take notice of is a 'dry mouth'. It is assumed that if our mouth is not dry, our body has enough water.  
*A 'dry mouth' is the last outward sign of thirst and extreme dehydration.*
- Our body is made up of about 75% water and has a complex water rationing system. The brain tissue has even more water - said to be 85%. The brain's need for water takes absolute priority over all other parts of the body.
- When the "ration master" in charge of the body's water distribution system experiences a shortage of water, it sends an alarm signal. This is very much like the radiator of a car giving out steam when the cooling system is not adequate for the uphill drive. Water rationing signals can include:
  - Dyspepsia - Heartburn
  - Rheumatoid Pain
  - Back Pain
  - Angina Pain - Heart
  - Headaches
  - Dry eyes
  - Leg Pain on Walking

### How much water?

A healthy person should drink a minimum of 1 glass (200ml) of water per 10 kg of body weight per day, and at least double that in time of stress or illness. Your body needs at least 6 to 8 glasses of water each day. This means pure water. Coffee, tea, colas, fruit juice, milk and other liquids don't count. It is true that tea, coffee and colas contain water, but they also contain dehydrating agents. They get rid of the water they are dissolved in plus they draw extra water from the reserves of the body!

We can't substitute other liquids for water any more than we would want to fill the car battery with milk, the steam iron with tomato juice or wash the walls with coffee.