

Better Health...Best Self

Food & Fitness Newsletter

Vernon Park Church of God

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BACK TO BASICS—Part 1: Water

HAPPY NEW YEAR... A great way to start 2017 is to get back to the basics with your health. Simple and inexpensive methods like drinking enough water, getting sufficient sleep, regular exercise, and consuming foods of various colors and nutritional content can help to improve your overall quality of life. Let's begin this "Back to Basics" series discussing water and how its ample consumption is key in supporting good health.

Drink water-Over 60% of your body is composed of water. How much water you consume daily plays an important role in maintaining a healthy body. The Institute of Medicine recommends that women consume 91 ounces (2.7 liters) of water daily. For men, it's about 125 ounces (3.7 liters) daily. Filtered, bottled, or regular tap water comes down to personal preference. However, the EPA (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency) does follow stricter guidelines than the FDA (U.S. Food and Drug Administration) in regard to the water that we drink in this country. The color of



your urine is a good indicator of your level of hydration. Your urine should be fairly clear and light in color. Very dark yellow urine is a sign that you may need to drink more water. It's essential to drink enough water daily and consume fruits and vegetables high in water content.

Healthy skin-Adequate water consumption supports healthier and younger looking skin by replenishing skin tissues, moisturizing the skin, and increasing skin elasticity.

Fatigue relief-Fatigue is one of the first signs of dehydration. Drinking enough water can help your organs to function more efficiently thus reducing fatigue.

Mood improvement-Research has shown

that dehydration can negatively affect your mood and ability to think. To improve mood and cognitive function, drink up!

Headache and migraine relief-A study published in the European Journal of Neurology

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EAT THE RAINBOW

Nature has provided us with a beautiful array of fruits and vegetables from every color of the rainbow. These healthy carbs range from red, orange, yellow, green, white, blue and purple in color. Each color contains a yummy treasure chest of its own life changing health benefits. We're all human and want our treats and sweets from time to time. However, the key to obtaining a complete, healthy and balanced diet is to consume foods from every color family regularly. Traditional preparations like steaming, grilling or baking are great. But to retain ALL the nutrients from these foods, blending natural raw fruits and veggies into delicious smoothies and juices is an even better alternative!

THE REDS: ANTI-AGING

Foods containing red pigmentation often contain vitamins, minerals and antioxidant nutrients that can help protect the body from stressors associated with aging and reverse the wear and tear of time on the body. Foods such as apples, cranberries, pomegranates, strawberries,

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goji berries, red bell peppers and tomatoes consumed regularly can give you back that "youthful glow".

THE ORANGES: IMMUNE BOOSTING



These foods include sweet potatoes, oranges, carrots and orange bell peppers, to name a few. Nutrients commonly found in orange foods have been long associated with immune support. Vitamin A, the B-Vitamins, Vitamin C, Vitamin D, Vitamin E, selenium and zinc are directly associated to healthy immune function and found abundant in these foods.

THE YELLOWS: INFLAMMATION-REGULATING Studies have shown that consuming yellow and dark yellow foods can help reduce inflammation in the body. Inflammation is considered to be a major cause of cancer, heart disease, diabetes, arthritis and dementia. Golden beets,

pineapple, rainier cherries, saffron, turmeric, yellow chili peppers and powdered or ground flax seeds are some members of this group. Ginger is also a great anti-inflammatory and anti-nausea source, but not yellow in color.

THE GREENS: DETOXIFYING

Green foods contain chlorophyll, a pigment responsible for their green color. Chlorophyll is known to eliminate toxins like heavy metals, pesticides and industrial pollutants from the body. Green foods also provide critical nutrients for the liver's natural detoxification process. Some of these foods include broccoli, parsley, cilantro, Brussels sprouts, artichokes, collard greens, kale, wheat grass and green tea. Lemons, although not green in color, are also excellent detoxifiers that can simply be added to water.

THE WHITES: BALANCE HORMONE LEVELS, CANCER PREVENTING & IMMUNE BOOSTING

Here's a great way to wear white all year long and reap some major health benefits...put them in you instead of on you! Foods like potatoes, bananas, garlic, white peaches, white nectarines, white corn, mushrooms, cauliflower, onions and turnips are examples of these tasty white treasures. They contain a power punch of potassium, magnesium, and fiber which has been shown to boost immunity, prevent some cancers, strengthen bone tissue and help to balance hormone levels.

THE BLUES & PURPLES: BRAIN EMPOWERING Blackberries, blueberries, plums, purple cabbage, eggplant, black beans, purple grapes and avocados are among the top foods in this group that contain antioxidant nutrients which benefit the brain and central nervous system. These indigo colored foods have been linked to maintaining brain health, improving sharpness of memory and overall cognitive functioning that tend to decline with age.

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found that increasing water intake helps reduce the intensity and length of headaches.

Healthy digestion and constipation relief-Drinking sufficient water boosts your metabolism and helps the body break down food and improve digestion. Water also prevents constipation by keeping the stools hydrated so they are not hard and difficult to pass. Warm water, in particular, is good for digestive health.

Weight loss-Drinking water prior to meals fills your stomach and can suppress appetite, supporting your weight loss efforts.

Flushes toxins-Water is an excellent detoxifier because it helps flush toxins out of the body and get rid of waste through sweat and urine.



Regulates body temperature-Water has the ability release heat from the body as sweat evaporates from the skin, helping the body maintain an even body temperature. Water also keeps your muscles and joints lubricated preventing cramps and sprains.

Helps rid bad breath-Bad breath is a sign you may not be drinking enough water. Water helps eliminate bad breath by washing away food particles and oral bacteria that create mouth odor.

Resources: ¹How Much Water Do You Really Need? (n.d.). Retrieved December 30, 2016, from <http://www.doctoroz.com/blog/leigh-vinocur-md-facep/how-much-water-do-you-really-need>; ²Top 10 Health Benefits of Drinking Water. (2014). Retrieved December 30, 2016, from <http://www.top10homeremedies.com/kitchen-ingredients/10-health-benefits-of-drinking-water.html>

