

The Water Cure - Healthy Living for Dancers (Volume 6)

By Veronica Collings, D.C.

What do the #1 trigger of daytime fatigue, heartburn, back pain, and headaches have in common? They are just a few of the many symptoms of lack of water.

If you've ever been on a weight loss diet, you know that you have to drink at least eight glasses of water per day to lose weight. Ever wonder why? Fat burning, as well as every other chemical reaction that happens in your body, happens in a water medium. This means that, for chemical A to connect and interact with chemical B, they have to be in water. Why is that important? Every second that you are alive, you are performing millions of chemical reactions just to stay that way. It's unfathomable, but think about it: to whatever degree that you are not fully hydrated, to that degree your body is, at best, not functioning at its full potential and, at worst, struggling to keep you alive.

It's estimated that 75% of Americans are chronically dehydrated. Since chronic pain is one of many symptoms of dehydration, and I see many patients with pain, I see this problem all too often. How did we get this way? I believe that soft drinks and caffeinated beverages are a major cause. People believe that when they drink this stuff, they are giving their body the water that it needs. In fact, these beverages cause water loss due to the diuretic effect of caffeine. A diuretic is a drug that forces urination and caffeine, such as in coffee, tea, or soda, is a potent diuretic. When you drink a caffeinated beverage, you will lose at least double that amount of water from the diuretic effect. Alcohol is also a potent diuretic.

As Brian Foltz, author of *The Secrets of Superior Hydration* explains: "The fact is, all fluids so not hydrate equally. Water and other fluids are two entirely different things to the chemistry of the body...Any beverages with dissolved solids are not effective at hydrating the cells. This is due to the action of the 'osmotic gradient' which is the primary function that moves water into the cells. The osmotic gradient is determined by the differences of total dissolved solids (solutes) in the water outside your cells (extracellular fluid) compared to the amount inside your cells (intracellular). Fluid moves from low concentration to high concentration of solutes." Drinking pure water (low



solutes) increases the osmotic pressure of the extracellular fluid to push water into the cells and inside the cells is where all those chemical reactions we talked about earlier take place. That's millions of reactions per second in trillions of cells. That's your life.

So, even though most people know water is important, why don't they drink more?

There are two barriers to hydrating that, once you understand how short lived they are, you may be more successful at getting the job done.

First, when you are dehydrated, you lose your thirst response. So, if you are not thirsty, it is harder to remember to drink. The good news is that, if you force yourself to drink your full hydration amount of water for about four days, your thirst response comes back and makes the process effortless. What is required for full hydration? Dr. Batmanghelidj, in his book, *Your Body's Many Cries for Water, You Are Not Sick, You Are Thirsty!*, recommends 32 ounces of water per day for every 50 pounds that one weighs. For instance, if you weigh 150 pounds, you need to drink three quarts of water per day. These are the guidelines that I've been following with myself and my patients for years with excellent results.

The second barrier is much increased frequency of urination for the first three days. This is the result of what I call the "robbing Peter to pay Paul metabolism" into which your body is forced when you are dehydrated. Your body prioritizes

water rationing to the most essential functions first. When you consider that you are anywhere from 70 to 98% water, depending on where you look, there are some needs that are more critical than others. For instance, your brain, being of #1 importance, is also the biggest consumer of water. Even a 2% drop in body water can trigger fuzzy short-term memory, trouble with basic math, and difficulty in focusing on the computer screen or on a printed page. My experience has shown me that it takes about three days for your body to shift from robbing Peter to pay Paul to utilizing the water you are now drinking. The bottom line is that, for the first three days, you will be urinating a great deal more than usual. If you don't know this ahead of time, it is easy to think that you'll be spending your life running to the toilet and be discouraged from drinking your optimum amount of water. By the way, urinating eight to 10 times per day is the normal amount, so, if you are going less, that is another sign of dehydration. Unless you are taking certain medications or synthetic chemical "vitamins"¹, your urine should be clear or straw colored. This is a sign of good hydration.

There are a couple of less common barriers to hydrating that some people experience. If you have nausea when you drink water, that may be a sign of copper toxicity, which can be remedied. If you feel bloated after drinking water, there is a method to avoid the excess air that you are taking in when you are drinking. There is a world of information on Dr. Batmanghelidj's web site, www.watercure.com, where he breaks down the water cure for specific complaints. There is a video of my appearance on the Channel 10 news which contains a patient testimonial on this remarkable cure. Please visit my web site, www.drveronicacollings.com and click on the "Water Video" link to learn more. For now, "salut" and I'll see you on the dance floor.

¹ Your vitamins should be derived from whole foods, not chemicals made in a lab. For more info on whole food supplements, visit my web site, www.drveronicacollings.com.

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