

Water: The Perfect Beverage

What does ‘healthy’ look like? In this day and age, it is easy to find a variety of answers to that question. From supplements to exercise machines, the media is flooded with ways for people to feel better and look younger. However, one simple, often overlooked way to improve health and well being is just a faucet turn away. Water is a nutrient that is often overlooked or underestimated, but plays a vital role in major body functions.

It is commonly known that the absence of water in the human body can lead to dehydration, but what is the purpose of consuming water? Water supports many functions in the body, including:

- Serving the transportation system of the body
 - Water acts as the carrier to provide other essential vitamins and nutrients to the body
- Acting as a lubricant
 - Water defends the body against shock. Water is present in the digestive system and can aide in smooth movements for the bone joints
- Participating in biochemical reactions
 - Digesting proteins and carbohydrates into forms usable in the body depends on the presence of water as part of the chemical reaction
- Regulating body temperature
 - The human body is composed of 60-75% water. Water changes temperature slowly allowing our bodies to remain within a healthy temperature range.

Each day water loss is balanced with water intake. Thirst is the key to letting us know when it is time to drink more water. Unlike other nutrients, there is no standard daily recommendation for the amount of water that should be consumed. Typically, adults should drink 6-8 8 ounce glasses of water daily. People with special needs, such as infants, children, athletes and older folks may require more water per day.

With one of the most important daily nutrients at your fingertips, fill up a glass and take a sip to good health!

To learn more about water, contact your local UNL Extension Office and ask for “Water: The Nutrient”.