



Healthy Choices

Water—More Than Just a Refreshing Beverage

BY WINSTON CRAIG

Most Americans don't drink enough water. Their average intake is only about 3.5 cups of water per day. For optimal health, we need about six to eight glasses of water per day. Additional water is required during the hot days of summer and when we engage in strenuous physical activity. Parents should especially watch the fluid intake of small children, since they are at greatest risk of dehydration due to their relatively greater surface area.

Since humans contain about 60 percent of their body weight in water, the average adult contains about 10 gallons of water. Not drinking sufficient water can cause you to feel sluggish, have dry skin, bad breath, constipation, and increase the risk of heat exhaustion and kidney

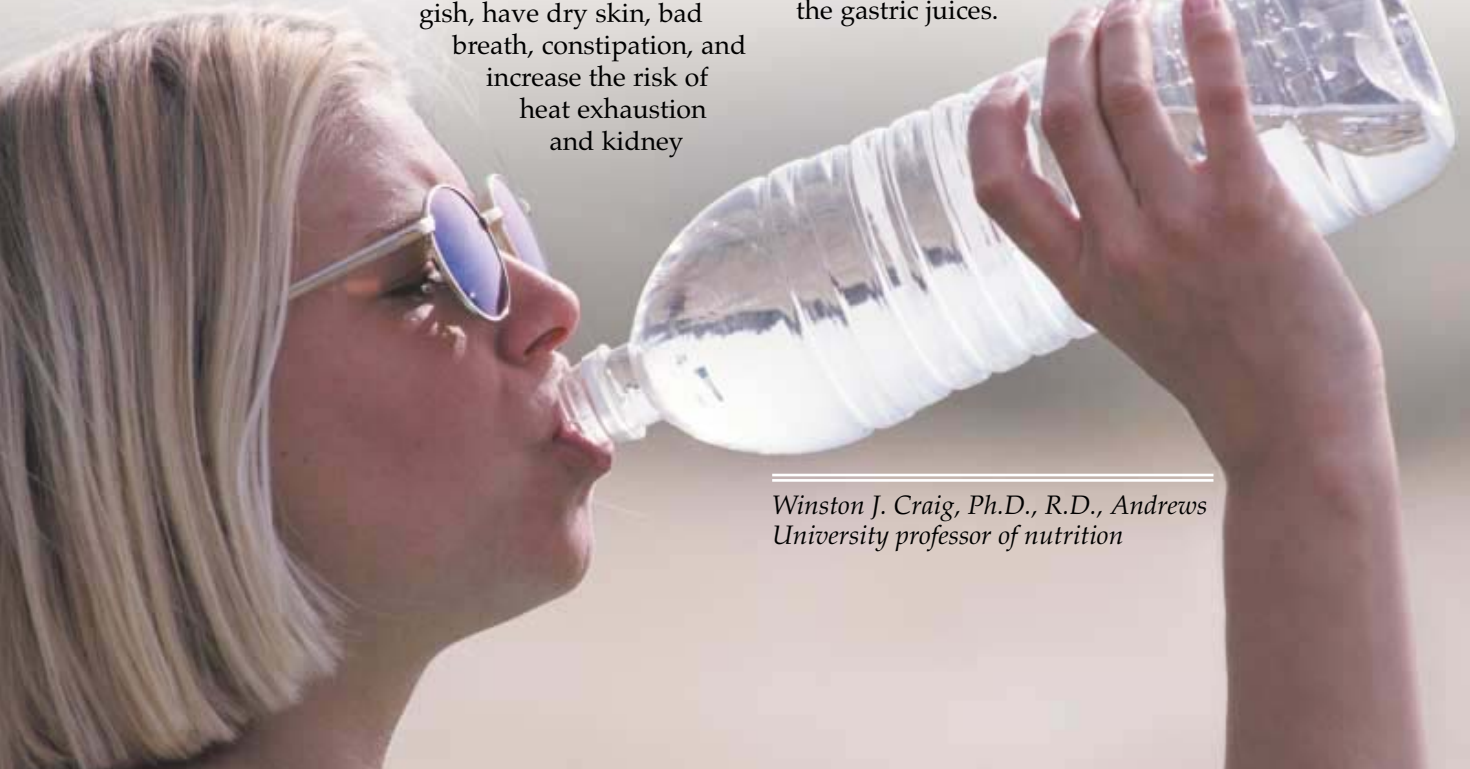
Proper use of water:

1. Drink six to eight glasses of water a day.
2. Increase your water intake during hot weather, physical activity, and illness.
3. Drink water between meals, not with the meals.
4. Ensure young children remain adequately hydrated.
5. Use bottled water where needed—it can be conveniently carried anywhere.

infections. The kidneys have two to three million filtering units which require adequate water for optimal function. Keeping well-hydrated, especially when fighting a cold or the flu, is very important.

Many people underestimate the amount of water they lose during physical activities, and quickly experience fatigue if they don't replace the water that is lost. Thirst is not a reliable guide. Experiments at Harvard University show that we need about 30 percent more water than what our thirst tells us, and fatigue during exercise can be substantially delayed when we keep properly hydrated.

In health and in sickness, pure water is one of heaven's choicest blessings. Its proper use promotes health. Drunk freely, it assists nature to resist disease (Ellen G. White, *The Ministry of Healing*, p. 237). Water is best drunk between meals rather than with meals. Taken with meals, ice water will delay digestion (White, *Counsels on Diet and Foods*, p. 420). The icy cold temperature of the water will hinder digestion, while the volume of water will dilute the gastric juices.



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