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MARCH 2015

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PHILOSOPHY

HOW TO DRINK WATER

PART 2

THE PHILOSOPHY AND PRACTICE OF OPTIMAL HYDRATION

In the last issue we explored how drinking water before and after meals can create vastly different metabolic effects. The first pre-hydrates the body and improves digestion; the second dilutes your digestive fire and leads to metabolic sluggishness.

We also discussed that drinking water with meals is not much better than drinking after, except to help you properly emulsify your food. If you are having peanut butter and rice cakes, you may need to take sips of hot water or some other beverage to get them down, but try to keep it to a minimum so as not to overwhelm your stomach's digestive ability (jathara agni in Ayurveda). Remember, hydrochloric acid has a PH of about 2. Water is typically over 7...highly alkaline. Keep these apart if you want your food to digest well.



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Water Do's:

First thing in the morning, drink 8-16 oz of lukewarm water. This will flush your system of toxins and pre-hydrate your stomach lining. Never eat breakfast without this step first!

Drink 8-16 oz water 15-30 minutes before meals.

Drink room temperature water- avoid ice-cold drinks.

For super-hydration and an immune boost, sip hot water all day long. Carry a thermos if you need to. By sipping hot water every 15-20 minutes, you not only hydrate your body on a deep level, you also liquefy and remove toxic sludge, clearing the way for a super-healthy microbiome. Best during winter and spring seasons.

Chew your water and drink your food! Try 'chewing' your water by holding it in your mouth longer, thereby allowing it to mix with your saliva and make it more digestible. Same with food- chew until liquid before swallowing to ensure optimal digestion.

Water Don'ts:

Don't drink (much) water during and up to 1 or 2 hours after meals.

Don't drink ice water unless your digestion is absolutely perfect (or it's the middle of summer, and even then sparingly).

Don't drink coffee, soda, or fruit juice instead of water. None of these hydrate the same way, especially pre-meal.

Recipes

Flax Water

Boil 2-3 TBS of flax seeds in a quart of water. Cool. Drink before meals instead of plain water. This viscous drink will nourish and heal both your inner and outer skin!

Takram

Instead of dessert, try this Ayurvedic classic. Mix $\frac{1}{2}$ cup buttermilk and $\frac{1}{2}$ cup water. Add black salt (available at Indian markets) and cumin powder to taste. Takram is the exception to drinking after meals because it is a phenomenal and delicious digestive aid!

AyurAde

Make your own Ayurvedic sports drink at home. To 1 litre of water add black salt, maple syrup and lime juice to taste. Drink for natural, healthy rehydration.

Ghee Coffee

Mixing ghee into your coffee has become a craze in America. Ghee not only minimises some of coffee's negative side effects, it also trains your body to burn fat as a fuel (if you don't add sugar to it). All this and great tasting too! Here's how it's done: add 1-2 TBS of ghee (clarified butter) to 2-4 cups of freshly brewed coffee. Mix in a blender until frothy. Add cinnamon, cardamom, saffron, clove, ginger or any warming spices to taste. Mmm...Ayurvedic cappuccino!





Copper Water

Fill a copper cup with water and let stand overnight. Drinking this in the morning will help to flush your liver and encourage digestion. Since copper water is heating, do not drink in the summer or if you have a fiery Pitta constitution.

Gold/Silver Water

Why do you think the kings and queens of yore drank from golden chalices? It was for their health! Here's how you can get the benefit of gold water even if you aren't royalty:

Suspend $\frac{1}{4}$, $\frac{1}{2}$, or a full ounce of pure 24 karat gold in a litre of water (you can use a piece of pure gold jewelry too- but nothing under 22 karats!). Tie the gold with string and do not let it touch the sides of the kettle. Let half the water boil out and put this water in a jar. Take one or more sips per day. Great for the heart, libido and circulation. Nehru's cooks are said to have prepared his rice this way, and it is one reason he was such a phenomenal speaker! In the summer or for fiery Pitta constitutions, you may substitute with silver to keep from heating up!

Food and Physics

The knowledge modern Western dieticians have about human nutrition is akin to that of astronomers and scientists of the late 19th century, who thought they had the universe pretty much figured out- until, of course, a young patent clerk with wild hair and even crazier ideas dropped his Theory of Relativity, and knocked the Newtonian mechanistic model on its side. Einstein proved that looking at the universe as a whole could give us deeper insight into its individual parts.

Our "Newtonian" view of nutrition hasn't changed in the past few decades and there are no signs that it will evolve any time soon. Hopefully, a radical shift the kind Einstein brought to physics will put our old 'calories in/calories out' model in its proper context- not as the primary determinant, but a component of optimal nutrition. Among the exciting areas of research that could spark this revolution are the study of our microbiome- our inner and outer skin flora- and how it affects everything from mood and food cravings to the synthesis of hormones in the body.

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WRITTEN BY

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SIMON HAS A POPULAR DVD SERIES 'DECODING YOUR LIFE MAP WITH VEDIC ASTROLOGY', AND TEACHES SANSKRIT AND MEDICAL JYOTISHA AT THE AYURVEDIC INSTITUTE IN ALBUQUERQUE, NM. TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT ONLINE SANSKRIT LEARNING AT THE AYURVEDIC INSTITUTE VISIT ONLINELEARNING@AYURVEDA.COM. TO FIND YOUR DHARMA TYPE, VISIT WWW.SPIRITTYPE.COM OR READ THE FIVE DHARMA TYPES, VEDIC WISDOM FOR DISCOVERING YOUR PURPOSE AND DESTINY, PUBLISHED BY DESTINY BOOKS.