

Here's to You

By Tim Tice, Groundwater Technician

Many articles have been written on the health aspects of drinking enough water, keeping yourself hydrated and staying in touch with your own overall physical condition. I often throw out a search to the World Wide Web and see what I can learn about a subject or two. These searches usually take place when the inquisitive side of me is running on empty and boredom sets in.

One topic that has caught my attention over the past few months is the information about staying healthy and what I HAVE to do now as opposed to just ten years ago, which I never thought of. It truly is amazing to me that during recent history it was never required of me to think of physical health. Playing recreational softball, on the racquetball court a few times a week and the weekly physical work around the home made thinking of physical health, none existent.

One aspect of staying healthy is the amount of water we consume on a daily basis, which in itself has variations as to the true facets of health related prospects as well as how much is the correct quantity.

I, myself, probably do not consistently drink enough water throughout the day, unless attending a conference where the consumption of water is spoken with regularity. After reading some commentaries and editorials on water consumption, I would like to share some points that I never considered.

If you were to lose two percent of your body's water supply, then your ability to focus on smaller print and performing basic math procedures would be hindered. Afternoon fatigue is most common among people who are mildly dehydrated, which studies show 75 percent of Americans have mild chronic dehydration, daily.

To quote Samuel Taylor Coleridge, from the poem, "Rime of the Ancient Mariner",

“Water, water, every where,
And all the boards did shrink;

Water, water, every where,
Nor any drop to drink.”

It is pretty amazing the percentages of Americans that have some level of dehydration and probably do not realize it, in a country that supposedly has it all. Can it be attributed to the other items we reach for to quench our thirst?

Water serves many functions for our bodies, particularly in the mechanics of the body. Water acts as the oil of our bodies, is the base for saliva generation, joint movement and metabolism control. In a study, it was stated that water plays a function in the prevention of some diseases.

Not to quote the adage of eight glasses of water a day keeps weight down, but eight glasses of water daily can decrease the risk of colon cancer by 45 percent and bladder cancer by 50 percent. That in it self may be worth keeping a glass of water on the desk.

I think it is safe to say that “There are none of us who wouldn't do what it takes to keep our kids healthy.” Children and their developing bodies need two resources to grow in such a way their psychological and physical abilities can excel. The first is a consistent interaction from their parents or guardians. The regular coddling of an infant has proven the development of their brain far exceeds the infant who is only held during feeding time. Being that the human brain is 95 percent of water, the second resource is healthy fluids for nutrition yet water is probably the one most forgotten about. Mild dehydration in children leads to a lessening in both mental and physical performance.

A big portion of our children's lives are spent away from home at an early age, and to train them on the importance of drinking water or using water as a substitute for a snack, then creates habits that will be with them for a lifetime.

A survey found that 65 percent of school aged children drink less water than they should, and following the above point of mild dehydration, one has to think that a lack of water can lead to poor concentration and test scores. A few signs of dehydration among children are headaches, irritability and sleepiness. Can you think back to an

occasion when we or our children have had these symptoms?

The importance of water in our lives added to the inexpensiveness of water is proof in the pudding that we should be consuming more water. Tap water has never kept up with the rising cost of soft drinks, sports drinks, energy drinks or bottled water itself. Do you suppose your great grandparents would have ever considered paying for a bottle of water? And more than a dollar per bottle! How much more would water instantly jump in price if you were able to fill your fuel tank and travel on it?

There are many attributes to health when consuming water, such as suppressing a cough or cold, positive aspects relating to asthma and allergies, something that we can touch basis on in future articles.

Most of the time water is related to a feeling of goodness, cool swim on a hot day, washing the grime off from a day of hard work, soaking the tired muscles when influenza rears its ugly head. At times water can be disastrous as with flooding, or tsunamis, but for the most part water has and should continue to be the most important element in our DAILY lives.

As it continues to flow out of your tap, consider its importance; what it takes to get the water to your tap, the health benefits of proper consumption and the savings over the purchase of other drinks. So have a tall cool glass on me and with a hello, offer a glass to your neighbor, you might be surprised what you may learn from someone you haven't spoken with in long time. Have a great summer! Mr. OpTIMist.