Dehydration Myths

Every single cell in the human body needs water to function properly. We need water to regulate our temperature, to cushion and protect joints and organs and to help digestion move smoothly. Most of us drink at least some water every day, but now that it's summer and the mercury is rising, it's important to be more vigilant than ever. Need to raise that hydration IQ? Here are some of the most common dehydration myths and the facts behind them.

Myth: Dehydration is uncomfortable, but not dangerous.
Fact: While most of us will only ever experience mild dehydration symptoms like headache, sluggishness or decreased urine or sweat output, it can become severe and require medical attention. Serious complications include swelling of the brain, seizures, kidney failure and even death, according to the Mayo Clinic.

Fortunately, adults can usually nip mild or moderate dehydration in the bud with some extra fluid, according to the Mayo Clinic. But when not attended to in early stages, adults may develop extreme thirst, dizziness and confusion, and stop urinating. Symptoms should be taken even more seriously in children and older adults, according to the Mayo Clinic, especially diarrhea, vomiting, fever, inability to keep fluids down, irritability or confusion.

Myth: There's no such thing as too much water
Fact: Overhydrating can be extremely dangerous -- but it's relatively rare. Drinking too much water leads to what's called hyponatremia, when levels of sodium in the body are so diluted that the cells begin to swell, according to the Mayo Clinic. Symptoms usually include nausea, vomiting, headache, confusion and fatigue, and can escalate to seizures and coma.

That doesn't mean don't drink when you're thirsty! It truly takes guzzling copious amounts to cause so-called water-intoxication. That's why refueling marathon runners, for example, are some of the more common hyponatremia sufferers. Of the estimated 2,600 cases of hyponatremia that have resulted in hospitalization that Noakes is aware of, he says there's "no reason they should have gotten sick." We only get ourselves into trouble when we drink beyond our thirst, he says, whether that's because of out-of-date advice or a sports drink commercial. If you're still worried, consider this rule of thumb: Try not to drink to the point where you feel full from water alone, Shape.com reported.

Myth: Coffee dehydrates you.
Fact: Only if you overdo it. While caffeine is dehydrating, the water in coffee (and tea, for that matter) more than makes up for the effects, ultimately leaving you more hydrated than you were, pre-java. Consuming 500 or more milligrams of caffeine a day -- anywhere from around three to five cups of coffee -- could put you at risk for dehydration, Mayo Clinic nutritionist Katherine Zeratsky, RD, tells HuffPost Healthy Living, but let's all agree to know when to say when.

Keep in mind those suggested intake levels include more than just water alone, says Noakes. "What you should say is glasses of fluid a day," he says, remembering to sip additional liquids the more you exercise. Coffee, tea, fruit juices, even sweetened bevage-
Educational Corner: Summer Allergies

Spring’s over, but you’re still stopped up, sniffly, and sneezing. Welcome to summer allergy season. It keeps going long after April’s showers and May’s flowers are gone. Many of the same triggers are to blame. Once you know what they are, you can take steps to get treated.

Pollen Is the Biggest Culprit

Trees are usually done with their pollen-fest by late spring. That leaves grasses and weeds to trigger summer allergies. The type of plant to blame varies by location. Those most likely to make you sneeze or sniffle include weeds like ragweed and tumbleweed and grasses like Bermuda and sweet vernal.

Smog: It’s Worst This Time of Year

Summer air pollution can make your symptoms worse. One of the most common is ozone at the ground level. It’s created in the atmosphere from a mix of sunlight and chemicals from car exhaust. Summer’s strong sunlight and calm winds create clouds of ozone around some cities.

Critters with Active Stings

Bees, wasps, yellow jackets, hornets, fire ants, and other insects can cause allergic reactions when they sting. If you have a severe allergy, a run-in with one of them could lead to a life-threatening situation. Insect bites usually cause mild symptoms, like itching and swelling around the area. Sometimes they lead to a severe allergic reaction, though. Your throat feels like it’s swelling shut, and your tongue might swell. You could feel dizzy, nauseated, or go into shock. This is an emergency, and you’ll need to get medical help right away.

Symptoms

Summer allergy symptoms include sneezing, watery eyes, runny nose, coughing, and itchy eyes.

Healthy Cooking: Mango Chicken Stir Fry

Ingredients:
1 tbsp. coconut oil, divided
1 lb. boneless, skinless chicken breast, diced
1 red onion, diced
8 oz. chopped broccoli
1 large bell pepper, sliced
1 large ripe mango, diced
Cilantro and cashews to garnish (optional)

For the sauce:
2 tbsp. soy sauce
2 tbsp. cashew or peanut butter
2 cloves garlic
1/2 tsp. freshly grated ginger
1 tsp. honey
1 tbsp. warm water, to thin
1 tsp. red pepper flakes
1/2 tsp. cornstarch

Directions:
1. Prepare the sauce: In a medium bowl, whisk the soy sauce, nut butter, garlic, ginger, honey, water, red pepper flakes, and cornstarch. Set aside.
2. Add 1/2 tbsp. coconut oil to a large pot or wok and place over medium-high heat. Once oil is hot, add the chicken and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Cook for about 5-6 minutes until the chicken is cooked through. Transfer to a bowl.
3. Add the other 1/2 tbsp. oil to the pot and turn down the heat to medium. Saute the garlic for about 30 seconds, and then add in the onion, broccoli, and bell pepper. Stir fry for about 5 mins, until the bell pepper is tender. Reduce heat to low, and add in chicken, mango, and the sauce. Cook for a few minutes until all is well-coated.
4. Serve with quinoa or rice, and garnish with cilantro/cashews!
How to Sink Summer Stress

It’s summer, so why are people so anxious? Enjoying the guilty pleasure of reading the newspaper one day you learn 1. College students stuffed with anxiety are overwhelming college health services. 2. Young investment bankers and hedge funders overcome by work are jumping out of windows… And there is so much more. Here are a few tips for avoiding stress this summer:

1. You’re not a machine. Please don’t treat yourself like one.

Your laptop or cellphone rarely express personal emotions. The main cycles of their “lives” are invoked by alternating current. You, however, are vitally cyclic. You need time for activity and rest (it’s hard to do a lot of fully directed tasks during sleep.) You might manage to work 110 hours per week – I’ve done it, and don’t recommend it - but not the whole 168 hours. Your consciousness flows across a 24 hour cycle making you sharp and flat, excited and drowsy, in predictable, biologically determined ways.

Best of all, you get to rest. Machines don’t have chance to replenish, remake, and renew themselves. You do.

For the really dirty secret is that rest is exciting. Rest involves a lot more than lying on your bed stunned by that early morning alarm, or lying semi-conscious on the couch sprawled before the television. Rest engages all the activities that renew and remold you, taking in all the physical, mental, social and spiritual elements of well-being you can muster - or imagine.

2. Get physical. People enjoy moving. They enjoy walking. They enjoy nature. They love watching water. They feel better under the sun. Brief bursts of high activity improve mood and alertness.

So when your boss tells you to postpone your vacation (and daughter’s wedding) to fly off and fix finance failures in Malaysia, your first move might be to go outside and walk. If that’s impossible, a quick jaunt to the facilities may be in order, followed that very evening (thoughts of Tom Hanks make you balk on that flight) by a stroll in the park with your spouse and friends.

3. Get social. Humans are social animals, and summers are great opportunities to meet more of us. It’s not just that social connections of dizzying variety and depth decreases heart attacks, strokes, some tumors, depression and the like. Some like to say you spend the second part of your life reconnecting with people from the first. You can meet people through the briefest adventures – going into stores you’ve passed hundreds of times, visiting a museum whose materials do not immediately appeal. You don’t have dynamite yourself out of your comfort zone. Just stroll on out. And it’s more than acceptable to get out of that comfort zone in the comfortable company of others.

4. Check out what you think is purposeful and meaningful in your life. Periodically plan to do something you deem important. We are not just regenerating bundles of biological information; we are creatures brimming with ideas. Ideas that propel us forward provide more than meaning – they can make life a lot more fun.

What to do? The world’s in a pickle so there’s plenty to do. You might want to work to save old trees or neglected animals. You might want to visit a friend stuck ill at home. You might enjoy supporting political causes you think will sustain the planet rather than obliterate it. Or you might just sit quietly with friends talking about what you and they think counts. For there are as many ways to counter stress as there are forms of stress. And many forms of stress reduction work best in concert with others.

Using your imagination to engage the physical, mental, social and spiritual ways of constraining stress can both educate and enthral, and make the world a more appealing, enticing place.

Source: Psychology Today
Many of us experience stress on a regular basis and it affects each one of us differently. Excess stress can have a negative impact on our health and one of the most common results of stress is a change in eating pattern. Some people skip meals, diet excessively, consume excess amounts of caffeine, sugar, salt or fat, or over/under eat during periods of stress.

Here are some guidelines for healthy eating during a stressful time:

Start each morning with breakfast. It will help you stay alert and prevent overeating.

Try not to skip meals. If you don’t have an appetite, liquids (such as a smoothie) can sometimes be tolerated better.

Eat balanced meals of carbohydrates, protein and fruits and vegetables. Make an effort to choose food that is low in fat and whole grain. High fat foods make us feel lethargic and decrease our ability to deal with stress.

Add high fiber foods. High fiber intake has been associated with greater alertness and decreased perceived stress. Add foods such as oatmeal, nuts, beans, fruits and vegetables.

Try to develop a normal eating schedule. Space your meals and snacks out about every 3-4 hours. Eating regularly helps to keep your blood glucose stable and deal with stress better.

Get regular physical activity to help relieve stress or explore other options to relieve stress other than food.

Make sure you drink plenty of water.

Make sure you are feeding your body properly especially during a period of high stress. When our bodies are poorly fed, stress takes a great toll on our health.