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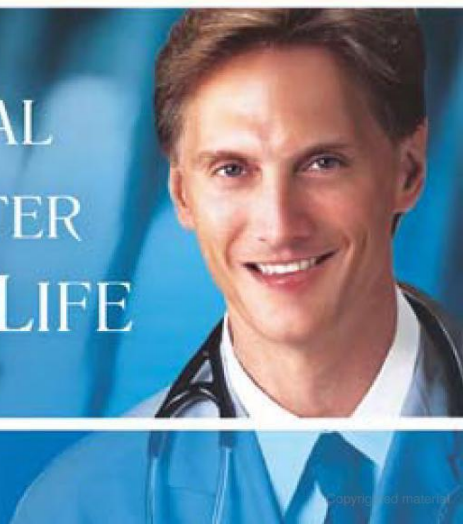
DON COLBERT, MD

THE SEVEN  
PILLARS  
*of*  
HEALTH

50

DAYS TO A  
HEALTHIER  
YOU!

THE NATURAL  
WAY TO BETTER  
HEALTH FOR LIFE



## DR. DON COLBERT delivers a *timeless* message!

Whether you read this book today or one hundred years from now, the timeless truths shared within its pages can literally reverse and prevent disease—guaranteed! Proverbs 9:1 says that wisdom builds her house on seven pillars, and we believe *The Seven Pillars of Health* will provide you with wisdom to make choices that can add years to your life.

Can you answer these questions with absolute certainty?

- How much **water** should you drink daily?
- What are seven indications that you are **sleep** deprived?
- Why can **stress** make you fat and ugly?
- How does the **food** you put in your mouth produce life or death?
- What does the Bible say about **exercising**, and what are the immediate benefits?
- What nine things can you do to **detoxify** your body?
- What are the most important **nutrients** that you need on a daily basis?

If you hesitated with any of these answers, now is the time to turn your world around and start tapping into

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## INTRODUCTION

**W**elcome to *The Seven Pillars of Health*! This book will introduce you to the seven basic pillars of a healthy lifestyle. It is designed to become your road map for health for the rest of your life.

This book is different from other health books for several key reasons. First, most other popular health writers are not medical doctors. I am. I have been a medical doctor since 1984 and have been board certified in family practice since 1987. I treat patients and operate a thriving medical practice in Orlando, Florida. If you come to my medical office during the week you will see me in blue surgical scrubs with a stethoscope draped around my neck. I will be reviewing patients' files and meeting with patients. I dedicate my life to helping people become healthy. Living a healthy life is not just theory and research for me; it's fact.

Because I have made my career as a medical doctor, the advice I give in this book is not just something I picked up from the Internet or from other medical professionals. These are not the seven "fads" of health or the seven "theories" of health, but the seven *pillars* of health. Backed up by medical research and my actual experiences with real problems and real people that span over two decades of practice, these seven pillars have contributed health and freedom to thousands of people.

For the past ten years *The Seven Pillars of Health* has been the basis of my medical practice and my ministry. You see, Proverbs 9:1 tells us, "Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars." When I read this verse over ten years ago, it became the inspiration for the message you now hold in your hands. Since that time, I have taught these seven pillars to some of the largest ministries in the United States as well as in dozens of churches. Many hundreds of people have told me of major improvements in their health just from attending the one- or two-day seminars. This book includes information from those seminars, plus

### **The Future of Medicine**

Thomas Edison once said, "The doctor of the future will give no medicine, but will interest his patients in the care of the human frame, in diet, and in the cause and prevention of disease."

much more, and presents a user-friendly, easy-to-read, positive handbook on health.

### Laying the Foundation

In laying the groundwork to help you obtain a higher level of health, I have implemented a couple of teaching tools. At the end of each day is a section I call “Building Blocks to a Healthy Life.” In these sections are the following features:

- *Points to Ponder.* This summary highlights the principles for that particular day’s material. It is something for you to reflect on throughout your day.
- *Action Step.* What we read stays with us longer when we apply what we’ve learned. Each day you will be able to implement some small change to help you live in divine health. Making small changes every day will make applying the principles easier.

Far from being a “don’t, can’t, shouldn’t” book, *The Seven Pillars of Health* is designed to liberate you and help you make choices that bring you freedom in every area of your life. To withstand the storms of life—diseases, attacks, and injuries—you must build on some fundamental precepts. Those precepts are found in *The Seven Pillars of Health* and are timeless biblical truths.

Some authors write books that may leave you feeling hopeless and as if everything is gloom and doom for you. I will not cajole you, make you feel guilty, or tell you to bear heavy burdens. My purpose is simply to show you how you can become strong, healthy, energetic, disease-resistant, younger-looking, wiser, smarter, and better looking. Studies now show that we can reduce our risk of deadly diseases such as heart disease by 80 percent or more and cancer by 60 percent or more—simply by leading a healthy life.<sup>1</sup> I will give you knowledge about your body and how it operates so you won’t be “destroyed for lack of knowledge,” as an ancient prophet said. It won’t take more work on your part. You will simply exchange old habits for new ones.

As just one example, many health books tell readers to avoid coffee as if it were some kind of plague. I don’t say that. Instead I will show you how to have healthy, caffeinated coffee every day, if you choose. I will also show you how to sleep through the night, how to better cope with stress, how to get rid of mental fogginess, and much more. God has given us life to enjoy it. I have written *The Seven Pillars of Health* to be a handbook for enjoyable living.

### **Why Fifty Days?**

This book is designed as a fifty-day journey, one entry per day.

On the Jewish calendar, every fiftieth year was the Year of Jubilee, when slaves were set free from their masters and debtors were released from their debts. In a similar way, this book will help to set you free from poor health, bad habits, and disease.

Over the next fifty days, read each daily entry and incorporate these valuable pillars in your life. Please do not try to rush through this program in one sitting, or you may be overwhelmed by the information. *Take it one day at a time*: digest the material you read, make notes, and pray and ask God to enlighten you. My main concern is that these seven pillars of health become your foundation for a lifetime.

Again, welcome to *The Seven Pillars of Health*! May this book change your life forever.

—DON COLBERT, MD





**PILLAR 1**

**Water**

## DAY 1: Water and You

**M**y wife, Mary, and I flew into a city where I was speaking at a conference, and a local family met us at the airport. To my surprise, the husband and children hugged me, and some of the children began to cry. Never before had I received such a warm reception.

“You helped us get our mother and wife back,” they said. The mother had heard a teaching I had given from my book *The Bible Cure for Headaches* and followed the recommendations, one of which is to drink two to three quarts of filtered water each day.<sup>1</sup> Within weeks, the headaches were gone. It was now six months later, and she was pain free. She was now able to care for her beautiful family.

Since her childhood, this woman had suffered from migraine headaches that left her unable to function and care for her family. The headaches were also interfering with her ability to practice as a professional psychologist. She had been to neurologists and doctors and tried dozens of medications, but they all failed to help her. Over time her headaches had grown worse, and even the strongest pain medicines available did not help to alleviate them.

This woman had been mildly dehydrated most of her life and never realized the cure for her headaches was as close as her glass of water.

### Why Water?

I start our study of *The Seven Pillars of Health* with water because it is the most foundational aspect of health.

Water is the single most important nutrient for our bodies. It is involved in every function of our bodies. You can live five to seven weeks without food, but the average adult can last no more than five days without water.<sup>3</sup>

As a Florida resident, I have lived through several periods of drought, and when we don't receive adequate amounts of rainfall, the local government rations water consumption. We can water our lawns only on certain

### Did You Know . . . ?

- ▶ Your body is about 70 percent water.
- ▶ Your muscles are about 75 percent water.
- ▶ Your brain cells are about 85 percent water.
- ▶ Your blood is approximately 82 percent water.
- ▶ Even your bones are approximately 25 percent water.<sup>2</sup>



days and during certain times on those days. Your body does a similar thing when it becomes dehydrated: it begins to ration the water.

And yet some people water their houseplants more than they do their own bodies! You are valuable; take care of yourself and properly hydrate your body.

### A Miracle Cure

Many people never drink water. Some don't like the taste of water, or they were never taught the importance of drinking it. Maybe their parents gave them juice, soft drinks, milk—anything but water. As a result, many people spend their day going from one caffeinated or sugar-based drink to another. They jumpstart their mornings with coffee. By mid-morning they have a soda for another boost, then drink sweetened caffeinated iced tea for lunch. Late afternoon it's another coffee-based or "10 percent juice" drink. Little do they know that all that caffeine and sugar are actually stealing water from their bodies, doing them more harm than good.

#### H<sub>2</sub>O 101

Your body loses about two quarts of water a day through perspiration, urination, and exhalation.<sup>4</sup>

In my practice I see people all the time whose bodies are starved for clean, natural water. They are neglecting the most basic pillar of health, and their bodies and minds pay a terrible price. By the time I see them they often suffer from headaches, back pain, arthritis, skin problems, digestion problems, and other ailments. Often they have gone to another doctor, who might have given them medications that didn't address the problem but only turned off the symptoms. This is similar to a red warning light blinking on your car's dashboard, informing you to check your engine. If you simply decide to remove the fuse to turn off the warning light instead of taking your car in for service, you will eventually ruin your car's engine. That is a simple illustration of what many individuals do by taking medications instead of addressing their body's "warning light" that they are dehydrated and need an adequate intake of clean water.

Many Americans live in a mildly dehydrated state with various irritating symptoms and never realize it. I often tell patients that when they have a headache, they don't have a Tylenol deficiency. When they have joint pain, they don't have an Advil deficiency. When they have heartburn, they don't have a Pepcid deficiency, and if they are depressed, they

don't have a Prozac deficiency. In each of these cases, their body is often crying out for water.<sup>5</sup>

Mary and I have lost count of the people who come up to us at seminars and say, "I had this or that problem, but I took your advice and started drinking water, and it went away." People tend to lose excess weight, their arthritis problems disappear, and their high blood pressure begins to return to normal levels.

If it sounds like a miracle cure, that's because it is! God created us to rely on water for our very lives. If you have ever read the Bible, you may have seen how water is a major theme in the Old Testament. People were always digging into the ground looking for water, and when they found it they gave their wells names and defended them with their lives. That's how critical water was for survival back then.

Water is just as important for you and me today.

I treat every patient I see in my practice first with water. Most of my patients get better when they simply drink as much water as their body is asking for. Drinking sufficient amounts of the right kind of water will also do more to improve your health than anything else you can do!



### Take a Guess

**What percentage of water does the average adult male body contain?**

- ▶ a. 40–50 percent
- ▶ b. 50–60 percent
- ▶ c. 62–65 percent

**Answer: c.** The average adult male's body is 62–65 percent water, compared to women, who have 51–55 percent water. Men have more water in their bodies because they generally have more muscle mass, whereas women have a higher percentage of body fat.<sup>6</sup>

## BUILDING BLOCKS TO A HEALTHY LIFE 1

**POINTS TO PONDER:** *Water is the single most important nutrient for our bodies and is considered a "miracle cure" for many health conditions. It is involved in every function of our bodies. Your body loses about two quarts of water a day through perspiration, urination, and exhalation. If you wait until you are thirsty to drink water, then you are most likely already dehydrated.*

**ACTION STEP:** *Instead of reaching for a soft drink or tea, drink clean, natural water.*

## DAY 2: What Happens When You Don't Drink Water

**A** patient of mine had terrible back pain every time he got up in the morning. He had been seeing another doctor and taking anti-inflammatory medicine, but it didn't help. The pain and stiffness were worse in the morning, so he started waking up earlier and staying up since the pain would not be as intense. As he told me about his condition I could almost sense his desperation. He thought I would put him on some novel treatment or pharmaceutical regimen. But I didn't. I prescribed for him a glass of alkaline water and told him to set it on his nightstand and drink it when he woke up in the middle of the night. He wasn't convinced this would solve his problem. It seemed too simple, almost childish, but he tried it anyway—and it worked. The back pain went away.

His body was mildly dehydrated and acidic and was, in effect, “stealing” water from his facet joints, disks, muscles, and connective tissues of the back in order to “water” his important organs. This may be a very simple explanation for the complex pathophysiology that is beyond the scope of this book. However, I have decided to keep it simple so that I do not bog you down, dear reader, with medical terminology.

### H<sub>2</sub>O 101

Water plays a vital role in regulating body temperature, transporting nutrients and oxygen to cells, removing waste, cushioning joints, and protecting organs and tissues.<sup>1</sup>

A recognized physician, F. Batmanghelidj, MD, in his book titled *Water for Health, for Healing, for Life*, points out

some of the benefits of maintaining your body properly hydrated:<sup>2</sup>

- Water is the main lubricant in the joint spaces and helps prevent arthritis and back pain.
- Water increases the efficiency of the immune system.
- Water prevents clogging of arteries in the heart and brain, and thus helps reduce the risk of heart attack and stroke.
- Water is directly connected to brain function—it is needed for the efficient manufacture of neurotransmit-

ters, including serotonin; it is needed for the production of hormones made by the brain, such as melatonin; it can prevent attention deficit disorder (ADD); and it improves our attention span.

- Water helps prevent memory loss as we age, reducing the risk of degenerative diseases such as Alzheimer’s disease, multiple sclerosis, Parkinson’s disease, and Lou Gehrig’s disease.
- Water affects our appearance, making our skin smoother and giving it sparkling luster; it also reduces the effects of aging.

When your body lacks the water it needs, it goes into a sort of rationing mode, as I described in Day 1. Think of a sprinkler system whose pressure is turned too low to reach all the grass on your lawn. Some parts stay green, but other parts begin to turn brown and die. When you live in a drought condition, your body smartly manages the water you give it, keeping the vital organs well watered with nutrients.<sup>3</sup> I call these vital organs “the starting five,” like the starting five of a basketball team. They are the:

- Brain
- Heart
- Lungs
- Liver
- Kidneys

The body keeps these organs well hydrated with water, lest you suffer serious consequences. But as a result, nonvital organs may suffer. In the body’s ranking system, body parts like the skin, gastrointestinal (GI) tract, and joints are less important, and so symptoms of dehydration usually show up there first.

### **Health Conditions Complicated by Dehydration**

Your body can’t send you an e-mail message or access your voice mail, so when it gets dehydrated, it lets you know in the only way it knows how: through unpleasant symptoms. Here are some major signs you are suffering from dehydration.

#### ***Joint pains and arthritis***

Joint cartilage provides the smooth surface so that joints can glide easily during movement. Cartilage is about five times slicker than ice, and that cartilage is made up of 80 percent water. If the cartilage is robbed of fluid, the joints will eventually creak, crack, and pop, like a door on a rusty



hinge. The increased friction causes them to degenerate quicker, eventually leading to arthritis.

As people approach the age of fifty, back pain often becomes a real problem. And no wonder: three-quarters of the weight of the body is supported by the fluid inside the disks. When the disks in your spine lack water, they begin to degenerate and herniate more quickly. It's similar to driving a car on underinflated tires. The tires will either wear out faster or eventually blow out.

### **High blood pressure**

When the body is mildly dehydrated, it may restrict the flow of blood to nonvital areas and concentrate it instead on the vital organs. The immediate result: your blood pressure may rise. Picture a garden hose. Constrict the water flow with your thumb, and it increases the water pressure inside.

But drink enough water, and constricted blood vessels usually begin to open up, lowering blood pressure. Sure, you could take a blood pressure medication, but why, when the safer, cheaper solution is usually to drink enough water? I've had many patients lower their blood pressure to normal with an adequate intake of water. Of course, weight loss, stress reduction, and a sensible diet are also important for lowering blood pressure.



### **Take a Guess**

**Which food is highest in water content?**

- ▶ a. Watermelon
- ▶ b. Lettuce
- ▶ c. Grapefruit

**Answer: b.** Lettuce. Although all of the foods listed have a high percentage of water content, a half cup of lettuce has the highest at 95 percent.<sup>4</sup>

### **Digestion problems**

Are you a Pepcid-popper? Do you always have a roll of Tums at your desk or in your purse? Water is the hero of the gastrointestinal tract. It is the basis of every fluid your body needs for digestion, including saliva, bile, stomach acid, pancreatic juices, and even the mucus that lines our GI tract. Without adequate water, the whole digestive system goes into emergency mode, and you may get heartburn, indigestion, constipation, hemorrhoids, and even ulcers.

The mucous layer in your stomach is 98 percent water. It protects against stomach acid, and it contains bicarbonate, which neutralizes stomach acid. When your body has adequate water, the mucous layer is thick, preventing the acid from burning the stomach lining. Without a thick mucous layer, you may experience chronic burning whenever you eat.

Ulcer medications may do more harm than good; they treat the symptoms, so you feel better. But over time they reduce your stomach acid,

leaving plenty of room for *Helicobacter pylori*, or *H. pylori*, the primary ulcer-causing bacteria, to run rampant.

But water keeps the digestive juices supplied and helps your body create all the acid it needs. That acid is your friend in this case, because it kills the bacteria *H. pylori* that cause ulcers, and it also improves digestion.

### **Asthma**

Asthmatics usually have high histamine levels. Histamine is a neurotransmitter that causes the muscles in the bronchial tubes to constrict, restricting the flow of air. Your bronchial tubes need adequate hydration to prevent constriction. Animal studies have shown that histamine production goes down as water intake goes up.<sup>5</sup> The same goes for allergies, which are also usually associated with elevated histamine levels.

People with asthma should *slightly* increase their salt intake, provided they don't have high blood pressure or heart disease. Dr. Batmanghelidj explains the reason why salt is important to asthmatics:

In the first stages of asthma, mucus is secreted to protect the tissues [but] there comes a time [when] that mucus...stays put, preventing normal passage of air through the airways. Sodium is a natural "mucus breaker," and it is normally secreted to make mucus "disposable." That is why phlegm is salty when it comes in contact with the tongue. Salt is needed to break up the mucus in the lungs and render it watery for its expulsion from the airways.<sup>6</sup>

If you are an asthmatic or tend to have allergies, water may improve your symptoms more than the latest round of inhalers or pills from pharmaceutical companies. Besides, water is cheaper, too. As I say, "Health is cheap; disease is expensive."

Today we covered the adverse conditions that dehydration can have on your body. Tomorrow I will share with you a simple antiaging secret.

## **BUILDING BLOCKS TO A HEALTHY LIFE**

**POINTS TO PONDER:** *Dehydration robs from certain areas of the body to keep the brain, heart, lungs, liver, and kidneys well hydrated. Many symptoms of disease are the first sign of the body needing adequate amounts of water. Some of the symptoms of inadequate water intake may include headaches, back pain, joint aches, dry skin, allergies, heartburn, constipation, and memory loss.*

**ACTION STEP:** *If you are suffering from any of the health conditions listed above, identify which ones, gradually increase the amount of water you drink each day, and eventually these symptoms may start to subside.*



## DAY 3: The Fountain of Youth

**L**ocated in St. Augustine, Florida, is a historical landmark known as “the Fountain of Youth,” a legendary spring that reputedly restores the youth of anyone who drinks of its waters. One of the most persistent myths is that Spanish explorer Juan Ponce de León was searching for the Fountain of Youth when he traveled to present-day Florida in 1513. Each year many people visit the historical site and superstitiously drink from its water in hopes of reversing the aging process and looking forever young. The irony is that the myth is partially true: water does rejuvenate your skin, which can make you look years younger.

A few years ago I saw singer Tina Turner in a television interview, and even though she was well into her sixties, her skin looked fabulous. She said it was because she drank at least two quarts of water every day.

When you don’t drink enough clean water you may lose your good looks. I believe that water is the single best beauty treatment on the planet. It keeps your skin supple, your eyes bright, and your body spry. Consider this: Remove water from plums, and you get prunes. Remove water from your skin, and you get wrinkles. In a dehydrated state your skin becomes dry, flaky, and wrinkled. The skin is designed to hold in moisture, to be elastic. When you deprive it of water, the skin sags and loses its elasticity. Not even a jar of wrinkle prevention cream can cure that!

### Lose Weight, Feel Great

Proper hydration has other benefits for reversing the aging process. Water will also help you to manage your weight. When you are dehy-

### The Skinny on Skin

Skin...

- ▶ Is the largest organ of the body and weighs about six pounds.
- ▶ Grows faster than any other organ.
- ▶ Is tough, flexible, and waterproof.
- ▶ Stores water, fat, and vitamin D.
- ▶ Protects the body from germs, heat, cold, and sunlight.
- ▶ Is replaced approximately every thirty days.

drated, your body secretes aldosterone, a hormone that causes water retention. As you drink more water, your body releases the water it was storing for “survival mode.” During the first few days of drinking more water than your body is accustomed to, you are running to the bathroom constantly. This can be very discouraging, and it can certainly interfere with an otherwise normal daily routine. Take heart; it’s really your body’s way of getting rid of excess water and toxins. You are “flushing” out your system.

New research also shows that being dehydrated may cause your body’s fat deposits to increase. Dehydration can contribute to an inefficient metabolism by affecting body temperature. When you are dehydrated, your body temperature drops slightly and causes your body to store fat as a way to help raise or maintain the temperature.<sup>1</sup> Also, as some savvy dieters know, drinking water reduces your appetite by giving you a full feeling.

### Improve Your Memory

Have you ever felt as if you were experiencing a “senior moment”? You don’t have to be resigned to the idea of losing your memory anymore. For some time, it was common knowledge that nothing could be done about memory loss. It was accepted as a part of growing old. That is, until experts discovered that humans can grow new brain cells. PET (positron emission tomography) and SPECT (single photon emission computed tomography) scans can map brain activity and measure both the destruction and growth of new brain cells. This completely changed the way we viewed memory loss. Thanks to these marvelous advances, today we know that even damaged brains can grow new cells.<sup>3</sup> If we know what areas of the brain can grow new cells, then we may be able to improve memory.

One way to improve your memory is to drink a lot of water. Your brain loves water. The human brain is roughly one-fiftieth of the total body weight, and brain cells are said to be approximately 85 percent water. The brain is the only part of the body that is constantly active.<sup>4</sup> So to remain active, it must have water. Without adequate hydration, these processes can slow down. I believe that long-term dehydration may even contribute to Alzheimer’s disease, and I believe further studies will bear this out. For further information on the use of water to prevent and treat all kinds of diseases, I strongly recommend the book *Your Body’s Many Cries for Water* by Dr. F. Batmanghelidj.

#### H<sub>2</sub>O 101

As we age, our body’s signal for thirst tends to decrease, which may be the reason why some elderly people don’t drink as much water as they should. Their water reserves are typically lower, and their vulnerability to become more dehydrated tends to increase.<sup>2</sup>



### Water Revives Cells

Cellular dehydration affects how our cells function. The first sign of failing health is a shift of fluid from the inside of the cell to the outside of the cell. About two-thirds of the body's fluid is inside the cells, and the rest is outside the cells. But cells die when they don't have enough energy to maintain the membrane pumps, which maintain the balance of water inside and out.

When there is more water outside the cells than there should be, it compresses blood vessels and reduces the amount of oxygen and nutrients delivered to the cells. Cells suffer. Something as simple as water can bring health back to our cells by maintaining water balance in our bodies. This is increasingly important as we age, because cells lose water as we age. Believe it or not, newborn infants are about 80 percent water, whereas older people are usually less than 50 percent water.<sup>5</sup>

So the next time you are tempted to try the latest expensive skin cream or pop a pill, try drinking enough water. It will keep your skin hydrated, elastic, attractive, and healthy. It will help you manage your appetite, and it will improve your memory. By giving your body the water it needs, you will maintain your youth and smarts longer.

## BUILDING BLOCKS TO A HEALTHY LIFE

**POINTS TO PONDER:** *Water is a powerful nutrient to slow the aging process and to maintain your brain and memory. Your brain cells are mainly water—about 85 percent—and your brain is constantly active, even during sleep. Therefore, your brain needs to be well hydrated.*

**ACTION STEP:** *Increase your intake of salads, vegetables, and fruits since they all contain a high percentage of water.*

## DAY 4: **The Rap on Tap Water**

**A**s a kid you probably drank water out of the garden hose on hot days, or from the school drinking fountain, a farm pump, or maybe right out of the bathroom faucet. If so, you got it half right: we have to drink healthy amounts of water, but we need to drink the right kind of water, and tap water is not it.

I wish I could tell you that all water is the same, wherever it comes from, and that our body naturally filters out any “bad stuff.” But that’s not true. When there are harmful substances in our water, those substances get into our bodies and may harm us. Tap water is not as healthy anymore. Here’s why.

### **Smokestacks and Plastics**

Just a few decades ago you could find pure water right in the ground. A fifty-foot-deep well yielded plenty of pure water—that is, water free of contaminants, chemicals, and other substances our bodies consider toxic. But today, even wells two hundred feet deep may not yield pure water. They have been contaminated by the amazing increase of man-made chemicals used in industry, agriculture, and consumer products.

Industrialization and technology have introduced new, complex, and sometimes lethal pollutants into our nation’s water systems. Over half a million chemicals have been developed since 1965; most are water soluble, and many are toxic.<sup>1</sup> In 1968 the United States manufactured its one millionth chemical, and as of February 2006, there were 8,369,447 commercially available chemicals.<sup>2</sup> And this number is updated daily! One government report identified more than 2,000 chemicals in our drinking water.<sup>3</sup> But most water-testing facilities can only perform tests for approximately thirty or forty chemicals. Municipal treatment plants neither detect nor remove most chemicals from the water supply. Our ability to filter out toxins is lagging woefully behind our ability to create chemicals.

The past few decades have taught us that it is impossible to separate our water supplies from the environment we live in. The underground aquifers that feed city water supplies may catch runoff from dump sites, landfills, and even underground storage tanks. The chemicals we pump into the air from automobiles or factories eventually settle onto the land.



Sooner or later, anything we bury, spray, emit, or flush finds its way into our drinking water. According to the Environmental Defense Group, more than four billion pounds of toxic chemicals are released into the environment each year, seventy-two million pounds of which are known carcinogens.<sup>4</sup> That's why about half of America's ground water is contaminated, meaning about a quarter of the population is exposed to what I consider contaminated drinking water.

### **Agri-Pollution**

The other big offender is agriculture. Pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers, used in massive quantities, run off from farmland and may end up in underground aquifers, which feed city water supplies. Two billion pounds of pesticides are used every year—eight pounds for every American!<sup>5</sup> The Environmental Working Group found that a single glass of Midwestern tap water has three or more pesticides in it.<sup>6</sup> According to that group, farmers across the Corn Belt apply 150 million pounds of five herbicides (atrazine, cyanazine, simazine, alachlor, and metolachlor) to their corn and soybean fields every spring. Rain washes these chemicals into drinking water supplies. These chemicals are not removed by the conventional municipal drinking water treatment technologies. In many Midwestern towns and cities, children receive their lifetime dose of the herbicide atrazine, a carcinogen, in their first four months of life.<sup>7</sup>

Agricultural pollution is not limited to rural areas. Some of the worst contamination by insecticides has been found in urban streams.<sup>8</sup> Though banned in 1972, low levels of DDT have turned up recently in stream sediment and fish in major American cities.<sup>9</sup>

### **Drugs and Shampoo**

Believe it or not, pharmaceutical products may end up in drinking water. How? After consuming a drug, humans or animals expel it in their waste (or sometimes people flush their medications). Wastewater treatment plants then recycle the water for use. Antibiotics, hormones, and painkillers have been found in public drinking water.<sup>10</sup> German scientists report that dozens of drugs can be measured in a typical water sample.<sup>11</sup> Fish who live downstream from water treatment plants have been shown to contain man-made chemicals from today's most popular drugs, like Zoloft, an antidepressant, and birth control pills.<sup>12</sup>

Personal care products like cosmetics, toiletries, and fragrances are putting chemicals into water supplies, too. For example, toluene, a chemical used in nail polish, nail treatment products (such as acrylic nails), and

fragrances such as perfume and cologne, is suspected of presenting risks to human reproduction and development and has been linked to potential for reduced fertility or reduced chance for a healthy, full-term pregnancy. It is unsafe for use in cosmetics, according to the fragrance industry's International Fragrance Association.<sup>13</sup>

Researchers say the amount of pharmaceutical and personal care products entering the environment is about equal to the amount of pesticides.<sup>14</sup>

### Little Critters

Finally, though cities treat water to kill most bacteria, they usually cannot kill all viruses and parasites, such as amoeba, *giardia*, and *cryptosporidium*. *Giardia* is a major cause of diarrhea in day-care centers and contaminates many of the lakes and streams in America. It may be showing up in water supplies more often than we think. An outbreak of the microorganism *cryptosporidium* in Milwaukee's water supply in 1993 killed more than one hundred people and sickened another four hundred thousand.<sup>15</sup> Some observers believe some outbreaks of intestinal flu may actually be caused by such microorganisms in tap water.

It's bad enough having chemicals and microbes in the water, but the very things that are added to tap water to "purify" it may be hurting you as well. Let's look at what most cities add to their water to make it "healthy."

### Chlorine in Drinking Water

Cities add chlorine to public drinking water as a public health measure to kill microorganisms. But chlorine is not entirely safe. It can combine with organic materials to form *trihalomethanes*—a cancer-promoting substance. Bladder cancer has been linked to chlorinated drinking water in ten out of the eleven most reliable studies. One study found that 14 to 16 percent of bladder cancers in Ontario, Canada, can be attributed to drinking water that contains chlorination by-products.<sup>16</sup>

A study of drinking water and pregnancy outcomes in North Carolina reported a 2.8-fold increased likelihood of miscarriage among women exposed to trihalomethanes in drinking water. Chlorinated water has also been linked to birth defects and spina bifida. Many European

#### **Chlorine, the Anti-Vitamin**

Chlorinated water can destroy nutrients your body needs: vitamins A, B, C, and E, and fatty acids. Chronic skin conditions like acne, psoriasis, and eczema may clear up or improve by simply switching to unchlorinated drinking water.



cities have already abandoned chlorination in favor of oxidation to disinfect their public water supplies.<sup>17</sup>

Chlorinated tap water can hurt you even if you don't drink it. Those same trihalomethanes can get into your body when you shower. They evaporate out of the water, and you inhale them. A ten-minute hot shower can increase the contaminants absorbed into our bodies more than drinking half a gallon of chlorinated tap water.<sup>18</sup>

When you take a shower with chlorinated water, it can also make your hair brittle and dry out your skin. To avoid this, purchase a shower filter, which will remove 95 percent of chlorine from the water. (See Appendix A.)

### **Fluoride—Not So Healthy After All**

Most cities in the United States also add fluoride to the water, even though fluoride is a proven toxin. The subject of fluoride in public drinking water has become a hot topic, as it should be. Have you ever wondered why your tube of toothpaste tells you to call a poison control center if your child swallows more than a pea-sized amount? Because fluoride is a toxin!<sup>19</sup> The sodium fluoride that is added to toothpaste is created by aluminum smelting.<sup>20</sup> There are two types of fluoride: the sodium fluoride found in toothpaste and the more toxic *hydrofluosilicic acid* or *sodium silicofluoride*, most commonly used in the water systems in the United States and considered one of the most corrosive chemical agents known to man.<sup>21</sup>

Fluoride helps to prevent tooth decay, primarily in children, but it also partially inhibits a hundred different enzymes in the body. However, new information shows fluorinated water does not.<sup>22</sup> Fluoride may be linked to osteosarcoma, a rare but deadly form of bone cancer. Chester Douglass, chair of the Oral Healthy Policy and Epidemiology Department at the Harvard School of Dental Medicine (HSDM), recently came under scrutiny for allegedly submitting written testimony claiming that there was no significant link between fluoride and cancer. However, one of Douglass's doctoral students, Elise B. Bassin, using Douglass's data, came up with a different set of conclusions—she found that fluoride makes the risk of osteosarcoma five to seven times higher.<sup>23</sup> The outcome of the investigation is still pending at this time.

Fluoride can interfere with vitamin and mineral functions; it is also linked to calcium deposits and arthritis. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has said that people with cardiovascular and kidney problems, the elderly, and people with deficiencies of calcium, magnesium, and vitamin C “are susceptible to the toxic effects of fluoride.”

Dr. Charles Gordon Heyd, past president of the American Medical Association, stated, “Fluoride is a corrosive poison that will produce serious effects on a long range basis.”<sup>24</sup>

My point is to make you aware of the dangers more than to alarm you. I am not advocating poor oral hygiene or a boycott of toothpaste. Please *do not go* and throw out your fluoride toothpaste. Just make sure that you rinse out your mouth thoroughly and do not swallow your toothpaste! If you have small children, *please* take time to show them how to brush and rinse properly, and *teach them not to swallow the toothpaste*. Children are more prone to swallowing it, especially if it’s “flavored.”

### Aluminum Problems

Cities and towns also treat ground water with aluminum to remove organic material. The aluminum coagulates organic material into clumps. It’s impossible to then remove all the aluminum that has been added, so traces of aluminum remain in the drinking water. Aluminum may be worse for you than fluoride or chlorine. It has even been associated with Alzheimer’s disease.<sup>25</sup>

Some people ask me if boiling water gets rid of the chemicals. The answer is no. Harmful bacteria may be killed, but the chemicals remain. They don’t “boil out.”

Your body needs water, but tap water may not be the best source. I am strongly convinced that over time it will diminish your quality of life. Even if you can’t afford a two-hundred-dollar filtration system, you can begin by purchasing a pitcher filtration system or a faucet-mounted filtration system, like the ones manufactured by Brita, for as little as twenty dollars. You can find a solution within your financial means. Day 6 takes a closer look at the differences. Tap water is good for watering lawns, washing clothes, and flushing toilets, but not for drinking. You may be asking, “So what kind of water can I drink?” Tomorrow’s entry compares tap water to bottled water.

#### Did You Know . . . ?

If you have lead pipes, do not drink hot water from the faucet. Hot water increases lead concentration. Flush the pipes first by running cool water before using it.<sup>26</sup>





## BUILDING BLOCKS TO A HEALTHY LIFE

**POINTS TO PONDER:** *It's best not to drink water straight from the faucet, because tap water may contain toxins, heavy metals, pesticides, residual personal care products, bacteria, and other microbes. One of the chemicals added to our tap water is fluoride. Generally, there are two types of fluoride: the type added to toothpaste (sodium fluoride) and the type added to drinking water (sodium silicofluoride). The latter is the most toxic of the two.*

**ACTION STEP:** *To check your city's water supply, go the Web site [www.ewg.org](http://www.ewg.org) and click on the bar labeled "Tap Water Database: What's in your water?" Search under the tab "local findings" and select your city's name; it will generate a local water system report including any contaminants found in the water supply.*

## DAY 5: Is Bottled Water Better?

**M**any people already drink bottled water instead of tap water, making bottled water the second most popular beverage in the United States, behind soft drinks.<sup>1</sup> People today consume twice as much bottled water as they did a decade ago, and the growth in the bottled water industry is “unparalleled,” according to the Beverage Marketing Corporation.<sup>2</sup>

But is bottled water healthier for you? Does that attractive bottle with the pictures of snowy mountains and crystalline streams really mean the water inside is pure?

Bottled water is actually *less regulated than tap water* and can be just as toxic. Bottled water is considered a “food,” and so it is regulated by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Tap water is regulated by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).<sup>3</sup> The only requirement placed on bottled water in the United States is that it be as safe as tap water. But while the EPA makes cities test public drinking water daily, the FDA requires only yearly testing for bottled water.<sup>4</sup>

Furthermore, cities must have their water tested by government-certified labs, but water bottlers do not. The EPA forbids the presence of bacteria, which indicate the presence of fecal material, but the FDA has no such rule, meaning bottled water can contain fecal bacteria and still be legal. Big cities using surface water have to test for *cryptosporidium* and *giardia*. Bottled water companies do not.<sup>5</sup>

A 1999 study of one hundred of the most popular brands of bottled water showed that a third contained arsenic, trihalomethanes, bacteria, or other contaminants. A fifth contained man-made chemicals, and one contained phthalate at twice the level acceptable in tap water. Two had high levels of fluoride, and two others had coliform bacteria.<sup>6</sup>

And if you think bottled water is lead free, think again. The FDA allows bottled water to contain up to five parts per billion of lead, or a third of what is permitted in tap water.<sup>7</sup>

### **Where Bottled Water Really Comes From**

Brace yourself for this one. Dasani and Aquafina waters, two of the biggest brands in America, are reprocessed tap water from cities around the country. One of Aquafina’s sources is the Detroit River!<sup>8</sup> In fact,



about one-fourth of bottled water is tap water, according to government and industry estimates.<sup>9</sup>

Clearly the words “bottled at the source” have no meaning. They are a marketing ploy. The “source” of the bottled water in your pantry could

very well be the tap. As long as producers meet the FDA’s standards for distilled or purified water, they don’t even have to disclose the source.<sup>10</sup>

### Did You Know . . . ?

In 2005, the total number of bottled water brands—worldwide—is close to three thousand, conservatively, with Italy alone having more than six hundred brands.<sup>11</sup>

But many varieties of bottled water are very good. Penta Water, one of the top-selling bottled waters in health food stores, is considered the purest bottled water on the market. It undergoes a rigorous purification process to remove every possible impurity. It takes about eleven hours to make a bottle of Penta

Water. I find it especially beneficial for my patients with fibromyalgia, chronic fatigue, headaches, arthritis, and most degenerative diseases. I usually recommend two sixteen-ounce bottles of Penta Water a day, along with one to two quarts of pure spring water.

### The Problem With Plastic

The other major problem with much bottled water is that it comes in plastic bottles. Studies continue to show that some forms of plastic are not as safe as people believe. The very worst plastic used in some water bottles and food wraps, polyvinyl chloride (PVC), is a known carcinogen that emits pollutants from the moment it is created until long after it is discarded.<sup>12</sup> Studies clearly show that PVC leaches vinyl chloride and other pollutants, thus disrupting the hormonal balance, causing fertility problems, and damaging cells, organs, and tissues.<sup>13</sup>

Another common ingredient in some plastics, bisphenol A, is used in reusable water bottles. It can change the course of fetal development and cause abnormal chromosome loss or gain, which leads to miscarriage or disorders like Down syndrome. It has also been linked to obesity. Popular Nalgene water bottles—those hard, brightly colored, reusable bottles—and five-gallon bottles also contain bisphenol A.<sup>14</sup> Studies showed the chemical leaches into the water at room temperature.<sup>15</sup>

Most water bottles are made from a plastic called PET or PETE (which stands for *polyethylene terephthalate*). This kind of plastic is considered safer than PVC, but it has been shown to leach plasticizer chemicals called phthalates into the water when used repeatedly or when water is bottled for too long.<sup>16</sup> Phthalates disrupt the produc-

tion of fatty acids and interfere with the production of sex hormones. However, these bottles appear to be safe if the water is drunk within a few months of the date the water was bottled (if the manufacturer has assigned an expiration date), and then used only once and not refilled. Otherwise, PET or PETE plastics may cause the same kinds of problems other plastics do.<sup>17</sup> According to a 2002 report from the FDA, the government does not require manufacturers to put expiration dates on bottled water, but the report did say that “long-term storage may result in off-odor or taste.”<sup>18</sup>

I prefer drinking water from glass bottles or from bio-based plastics, which are made of natural products like starch, cellulose, and raw rubber. In 2005, one bottled water company, Biota, introduced the use of the first compostable bioplastic bottle. I suspect that many other companies will be following suit because as the price of oil increases, so does the price of plastic. Even Wal-Mart is planning on switching to bioplastic packaging in their stores.<sup>19</sup> It is fairly easy to avoid bad plastics because producers must label the bottle with the type of plastic it is made of. This labeling system is easy to follow:

1. PET or PETE: used to bottle soda, most bottled water, cooking oils, juice, salad dressing, peanut butter, and other foods
2. HDPE: milk jugs, one-gallon water bottles, some bottled foods
3. PVC: cling wraps, Reynolds Wrap, Stretch-tite, Freeze-tite (used by many grocery stores for meats), four-ounce Wesson Cooking Oil, Appalachian Mountain spring water, some plastic squeeze bottles
4. LDPE: food storage bags (like Glad and Ziploc)
5. PP: deli soup containers, most Rubbermaid containers, cloudy plastic baby bottles, ketchup bottles, other cloudy plastic bottles
6. PS: Styrofoam, some disposable plastic cups and bowls, and most opaque plastic cutlery
7. “Other” resins, usually polycarbonate, which contains bisphenol A: most plastic baby bottles, five-gallon water bottles, clear plastic “sippy” cups, some types of clear plastic cutlery, inner lining of food cans
8. PLA—bioplastic called polylactic acid<sup>20</sup>



The topic and debate over which plastics are safest will continue, and so will the recommendations. As for now, the safest plastics to use are PET (or PETE) and bioplastics.

### Proper Usage and Storage of Bottled Water

Reusing your water bottle may seem kind to the environment, but it's terrible for your body. Studies show dangerous levels of bacteria accu-

minate on and in the bottle as you reuse it. The water in the bottle may become so contaminated that, if it were tap water, cities wouldn't use it!<sup>21</sup> My recommendation: use that eight- to sixteen-ounce bottle once, then toss it.

#### Did You Know . . . ?

Plastics—including baby bottles—should not go in the microwave.

Store your bottled water properly. Always keep it away from cleaning compounds, paints, gasoline, or other household or industrial chemicals. Don't store it in the garage or shed, or in direct sunlight. Store it in the refrigerator, if possible, to retard bacteria growth, or in a dark, cool place in the house.

If you are going to drink bottled water, check if the bottler is a member of the International Bottled Water Association (IBWA), which guarantees that the level of contaminants, if any, is below FDA standards. Go to the IBWA Web site at [www.bottledwater.org](http://www.bottledwater.org) to see which bottled water makers are members.

Also check the mineral content of your bottled water. Spring or mineral water is also important. The ideal water is water that is high in magnesium (at least 90 mg per liter) and low in sodium (less than 10 mg per liter). For example, a few waters that meet these criteria are from the same area in Northern California—Noah's California Spring Water with an incredible 120 mg of magnesium per liter, Adobe Springs water with 110 mg per liter, and BlueStar Springs, also with 110 mg magnesium per liter. For more information, go to [www.mgwater.com/list5.shtml](http://www.mgwater.com/list5.shtml), where you will find links to these waters. Another helpful Web site that compares many different bottled waters is [www.tldp.com/issue/190/Bottled%20Water.htm](http://www.tldp.com/issue/190/Bottled%20Water.htm).

There are approximately three thousand brands of bottled waters worldwide. It is not possible to list each brand of bottled water. Two Web sites that help in finding information about different bottled waters are [www.AquaMaestro.com](http://www.AquaMaestro.com) and [www.mineralwaters.org](http://www.mineralwaters.org). Appendix C provides a chart that lists the pH comparisons of the various brands of bottled water.

You may be feeling overwhelmed and as if there is no hope. Be reassured hope is on the way, and there is light at the end of this tunnel!

## BUILDING BLOCKS TO A HEALTHY LIFE

*POINTS TO PONDER: Some bottled waters contain more toxins than tap water and are not as closely regulated as tap. If you drink bottled water, check if the manufacturer of the bottled water is a member of the IBWA (International Bottled Water Association). Always properly store your bottled water. Keep it away from chemicals, and store it in a refrigerator if possible. If the container is plastic, check the expiration date or bottling date.*

*ACTION STEP: Purchase clean bottled water, preferably alkaline and in glass containers rather than plastic. Penta Water, however, is extremely pure water even though it comes in a plastic bottle.*

## DAY 6: **Filtered Water**

**O**ne of the best kinds of water to drink is filtered water. Using a water filter in your home can be a big step toward restoring health to your drinking water. Some people use filtration pitchers or faucet-mounted carbon filters, some use full-home filtration systems, and others use reverse-osmosis under-the-counter systems and distillation. These may sound mysterious and expensive, but a good water filter probably costs less than you currently spend on soft drinks every month.

But not all filtration systems do the same things, cost the same, or create better water. Let's examine the pros and cons of each, and then I'll recommend what I think is the healthiest kind of water.

### **Carbon Filters**

Carbon filters are the “entry-level” filters: inexpensive, reliable, and common. They come in many forms, from a base model water-filtering pitcher that costs around twenty dollars, to a faucet-mounted filter, which costs a bit more, all the way to the kind that attaches near your water main and filters water for the entire house.

There are two types of carbon filters. One uses granulated carbon; the other uses a solid carbon block. The solid block filter costs more, lasts longer, and does a much better job at filtering out microorganisms. The only disadvantage is that the flow rate is slower than with loose charcoal filters.

A pitcher filter, which uses granulated charcoal, removes most chlorine and 90 percent of the lead. However, many toxins are not filtered out. Because it is so convenient and inexpensive, for some people this is the best filter to use—if the alternative is to use no filter at all.

But there are drawbacks to all carbon filters. Carbon filters are not totally effective for heavy metals, and they don't remove fluoride, viruses, pharmaceuticals, or personal care products.<sup>1</sup> Also, if you don't change the filters as the instructions direct, they can become more of a hazard than a help. Old filters collect the “garbage” in the water and may actually begin to breed bacteria.<sup>2</sup>

If you choose a carbon filter, you will remove some, but not all, of the impurities from your tap water. It's an inexpensive but incomplete option, in my opinion.

### **A Water Distiller**

Water distillers are extremely effective at removing everything, unfortunately even good minerals, from water. Distillers use electricity to heat tap water to the boiling point, separating impurities from the “steam,” which becomes your clean drinking water.<sup>3</sup>

The drawback with distilled water is that there are no beneficial minerals left in it! The water is mineral free. A growing body of evidence suggests that completely mineral-free water is worse for your body than water with dissolved minerals in it. Distilled water is absorbent water, meaning it absorbs carbon dioxide, which may make your body acidic. A distiller will get you halfway to your goal. You won’t have anything bad in your water, but it can adversely affect your health in other ways. A good water distiller can remove heavy metals, pesticides, herbicides, organic compounds, bacteria, and some viruses.

### **Reverse Osmosis**

In terms of price, reverse-osmosis systems are the “optimum level” of water filters. They filter water through an extremely fine membrane. It’s a slow process, and the cost ranges anywhere from a couple of hundred dollars to many hundreds of dollars, but, like distillers, they remove virtually everything from water: chlorine, fluoride, bacteria, parasites, chemicals, and heavy metals like lead and mercury.<sup>4</sup> Reverse-osmosis systems are commonly used by water bottlers to create their waters. They often add back minerals at the end of the process.

Like distilled water, most reverse osmosis creates acidic water. The water it produces is similar to distilled water. It is 95 percent mineral-free acidic and therefore aggressive—meaning it pulls minerals from anything with which it comes into contact. Because the water is acidic, it may keep your tissues acidic.<sup>5</sup>

Nevertheless, both distilled and reverse-osmosis water are the purest water. If you use these filters, make sure that you take adequate minerals. It’s also a good idea to add an alkaline booster to the water. A couple of drops in an eight-ounce glass of water will raise the alkalinity to a healthy level. (See Appendix A for more information.) You may purchase the drops that alkalinize the water from most health food stores.

What to drink, then? Let’s get to my recommendations.

### **Alkaline Water Filters**

Your body thrives in an alkaline environment since it is able to detoxify more efficiently than in an acidic environment. In an alkaline environment your tissues get rid of impurities more efficiently. When cancer



patients come into my office to begin nutritional treatment, their bodies are almost always very acidic and toxic. My first task is to get their tissues alkalized with alkaline water and alkaline foods.

Alkalinity and acidity are measured in terms of pH. On the pH scale of 1 to 14, a pH of 7.0 is considered neutral. Anything under 7.0 is acidic;

### **Did You Know . . . ?**

Snow water from the Alps or the Caucasus Mountains is some of the very best water to drink. That's because the melted snow water usually travels down mountains, gaining energy and oxygen.<sup>6</sup> But I advise not to drink snow water from anywhere else, especially in cities where pollution is a problem.

anything over 7.0 is alkaline. Blood has a constant pH of 7.4—it's alkaline. But most Americans' tissues are very acidic (as indicated by an acidic urine pH), meaning their bodies are less efficient at removing toxins. Many health problems are associated with being too acidic, including chronic fatigue, fibromyalgia, arthritis, arteriosclerosis, most cancers, diabetes, autoimmune disease, osteoporosis, and practically all degenerative diseases.<sup>7</sup>

I have had countless numbers of patients with painful osteoarthritis on many different medications for arthritis. Many have been pain free within a couple of months

after adjusting their urine pH to 7.0 to 7.5 simply by consuming adequate amounts of alkaline water and alkaline foods. As a result, many are able to go off their anti-inflammatory medications.

By drinking alkaline water, you start to bring your tissues back to an alkaline state. Some spring waters are alkaline, but you can create alkaline water from tap water or spring water by using an alkalizing filter. These filters sit on your kitchen counter and use activated charcoal and an electrolysis process to produce two types of water: one is alkaline, which you drink, and the other acidic, which you can discard or use for washing clothes, watering the lawn, or showering.

I use an alkalizing filter in my home and office. Because water alkalizers use an electromagnetic process to separate acidic water from alkaline water, the water you put into it must be rich in minerals and not distilled or reverse-osmosis water.

Some alkalizer filters also make the water clustered or "hexagonal," meaning that at a molecular level, it is denser, richer, and more energetic. All of these attributes benefit health in many ways. Clustered water moves easily within the body and aids nutrition absorption and waste removal. It is more readily taken up by the cells and is therefore more hydrating to the cells and helps them to detoxify. I also use clustered water in my practice.

Dr. Mu Shik Jhon, who has conducted extensive research on hex-

agonal water and its many benefits, says, “Hexagonal water moves easily within the cellular matrix of the body, helping with nutrient absorption and waste removal.”<sup>8</sup> Some of the benefits of hexagonal water are:

- Greater energy
- Rapid hydration
- Heightened immune function
- Better nutrient absorption
- Longevity
- Weight loss
- Greater metabolic efficiency

I have recommended alkaline, hexagonal water to even my youngest patients. In 2005, a ten-year-old girl and her parents came to my office from South Carolina. The girl had crippling juvenile rheumatoid arthritis and weighed only fifty-two pounds. Her hands were swollen like mitts, and her knees were swollen as large as softballs. I put her on hexagonal, alkaline water, one to two quarts a day. A week and a half later she was pain free, and her swelling was significantly diminished. We were giving her nutritional products as well, but not until two weeks later. When she arrived she was wheelchair-bound, but she was actually able to walk without pain after only a week and a half of drinking the hexagonal, alkaline water. Her parents were ecstatic. We raised the pH of her tissues. After a month, her hands were almost normal size. Hexagonal, alkaline water is especially effective in treating those with chronic disease. (See Appendix A.)

Certain bottled waters are also alkaline. Evamor and Abita waters are just a few of the alkaline bottled waters.

I use a variety of filters and spring waters because each has its unique benefits. I always start with spring water that is alkaline because it supplies minerals in their natural form. For normal, everyday drinking I use Mountain Valley Spring brand bottled water, from a glass bottle, and I treat it with my Vitalizer Plus machine, which converts it into hexagonal water. When I go to the gym, I take a bottle of Penta Water with me. Now, I realize that very few people are able to do what I do, but I’m frequently asked what type of water I drink. This is my regular practice.

When I make coffee I use an alkalizing filter, because coffee is more acidic. At home I use reverse-osmosis water in my ice machine. I also have a large filter outside of the house that filters all water entering the house. I encourage you to examine the benefits of each filter, do your research, decide what you’re going to do—and then do it! In my opinion, there is nothing more important to your health than water.



### Acid Test

If you would like to know how acidic your body is, buy pH strips at the drugstore. Collect your first morning urine and dip pH paper into it. It will indicate your urine's pH level with a change of color. The change of color can then be matched to a numerical reading. A card is included in the pH paper that correlates a color to a pH number. It is similar to checking the pH of a swimming pool.

Most people will have a pH test reading of about 5.0, which means their bodies are very acidic. It should be between 7.0 to 7.5. Close enough doesn't count. Even though five is only two points less than seven, a pH of 5.0 is actually a hundred times more acidic than a pH of 7.0. It may take you a while to achieve this pH, but keep at it. Continue drinking alkaline water and eating alkaline foods (such as fruits and vegetables), and take supplements discussed later in the book. Be patient, and know that by implementing each of these pillars you can achieve it.

So how much should you drink, and when? We will cover that tomorrow.

## BUILDING BLOCKS TO A HEALTHY LIFE

**POINTS TO PONDER:** *Filtered water is one of the best waters for your body. When choosing a filter, remember that carbon filters are the "entry-level" type of filter and the least expensive. Distilled water and reverse-osmosis water are the purest water. However, they are also the most acidic. In my opinion, alkaline water filters are one of the best types of filters because our bodies thrive best in an alkaline environment, which helps our systems function at an optimum level.*

**ACTION STEP:** *Start to look for a home water filter system. If you are on a limited budget, start with a pitcher filter or a faucet-mounted filter.*

## DAY 7: How Much, and When, to Drink

Once when my niece, Kennedy, who was three years old at the time, was visiting, I noticed how much she liked to drink sodas. So I went to the store and bought some small bottles of pure spring water. I gave her some, and, surprisingly, she drank it to the last drop.

Not long after, she said, “Mommy, Mommy, more water!” My sister was amazed. “How on earth did you get her to drink that water? She’s never liked water at home.” I knew my sister only gave her tap water at home.

The answer is that our bodies yearn for pure, clean water. But one of the most common questions I hear is, “How much water should I drink?” I’m going to give you the answer to that question. To determine how much water your body needs, take your body weight (in pounds) and divide it by two. That’s how many ounces of water you need every day.

### How Much Should I Drink?

Take your weight in pounds and divide it by two. The result is how many ounces of water you should drink daily.

\_\_\_\_ Weight ÷ 2 = \_\_\_\_\_ ounces per day

Usually that amounts to two to three quarts a day. Picture a one-gallon container of milk, and imagine it three-quarters full. If you are an average-sized person, that’s about how much water your body needs *daily*. If you weigh 120 pounds, you will need 60 ounces of water; if 220 pounds, you’ll need 110 ounces. Most people have no idea they require that much.

But you won’t consume it all in liquid form. Simply by eating lots of fruits and vegetables—as you should—you will get a quart a day. Foods such as bananas are 70 percent water; apples, 80 percent water; tomatoes and watermelons are more than 90 percent water; and lettuce is 95 percent water. If you eat an inordinate amount of starches, like breads or pastries, you will need more water, because these foods add little water to your body.



## Dr. Colbert Approved Coffee

Here's a recipe for healthy coffee. Use unbleached (brown) filters, organic coffee, alkaline water, and stevia instead of sugar. If you must have a creamer, use organic skim milk or rice milk, and never use a Styrofoam cup, as styrene, considered a possible human carcinogen, tends to migrate into food and beverages more quickly if they are hot.<sup>1</sup>

### Is Caffeine Bad?

Too much coffee, cola, and tea are not substitutes for water, but recent studies also show that caffeine isn't all bad for you. It helps prevent Parkinson's disease and cirrhosis of the liver, and it helps with male fertility. It has also been shown to protect the brain, possibly from diseases like Alzheimer's.<sup>2</sup> A Harvard study showed that the risk for developing type 2 diabetes is lower among regular coffee drinkers.<sup>3</sup> Coffee also is linked to lower rates of suicide, colon cancer, high blood pressure in women, and heart disease.<sup>4</sup> Coffee has more than one thousand antioxidants, which is more antioxidants than green tea. It is the top source of antioxidants in the American diet.<sup>5</sup>

People who drink decaffeinated coffee also show reduced diabetes risk, though at half the benefit of those drinking caffeinated coffee.<sup>6</sup>

The key, as with anything, is moderation. One or two cups a day won't hurt you, and research shows that it will probably help you. But three to four cups may be too much. You can drink iced tea all day and still be mildly dehydrated, because the caffeine is a diuretic, meaning it takes (or removes) water from the body. Some individuals with arrhythmias of the heart, fibrocystic breast disease, and migraine headaches should probably avoid caffeinated beverages altogether.<sup>7</sup>

If you don't like coffee—and even if you do—you should drink organic green tea. It has been a favorite in Japan for over a thousand years. Its antioxidant activity is two hundred times more potent than that of vitamin E and five hundred times more potent than vitamin C. This decreases the risk of cancer. Have two or three cups of organic green tea a day. And if you don't like green tea, try regular tea. The fact is, tea can be good for your mental health. One study on depression by a group of Finnish researchers found that individuals who drank five or more cups a day were not depressed, while those who drank no tea at all had the highest rate of depression.<sup>8</sup>

## Climate Matters

If you live in a warmer or drier climate, you will need more water. I recently had a patient who worked outside in lawn maintenance in Florida. He would sweat so much he could wring a cup or two of sweat from his shirt. He was drinking four to five quarts of water a day, a little over a gallon, to keep up with his body's water requirement. Most of us lose about a pint of water a day through perspiration. Our bodies also lose water through exhalation (about a pint a day), and through urination and stool (about one to two pints a day).<sup>9</sup> Two pints equal one quart, so our bodies lose about one and a half to two quarts a day. However, this doesn't account for excessive perspiration.

## When to Drink Water

Most people wait to drink until they are thirsty or until they have a dry mouth. By that time you are most likely already mildly dehydrated. A dry mouth is one of the last signs of dehydration.

Other people only drink during meals—another mistake. When you drink too much with a meal, it washes out the hydrochloric acid, digestive juices, and enzymes in your stomach and intestines, which delays digestion. Fluids, and iced drinks in particular, quench the digestive process similarly to pouring water on a fire.

You can drink some water with a meal. I usually drink room-temperature bottled water with a slice of lemon or lime squeezed into it or unsweetened tea. But don't go overboard. Meals are not the time to get most of your fluids. Stick to four to eight ounces with a meal.

Here's a typical timetable for healthy water consumption:

Start with an eight- to sixteen-ounce glass half an hour before breakfast. If you usually have juice, coffee, or tea with breakfast, don't eliminate them. The point of this pillar of health is not to take the fun out of life. You don't want to feel like a slave to water, but do limit coffee to one or two cups a day if you can. Organic green tea and organic black tea only have a small amount of caffeine, 30 and 50 mg per

### When's a Good Time to Drink Water?

Here are some rules of thumb about when to drink water:

- ▶ Drink fifteen to thirty minutes before meals or two hours after.
- ▶ Only drink four to eight ounces of room-temperature water at meals.
- ▶ Do not drink much water past 7:00 p.m., because it may interfere with your sleep.



eight-ounce serving, respectively. So you can have a few glasses of tea a day, though not late in the evening, as it may interfere with your sleep.

A couple of hours after breakfast drink another eight- to sixteen-ounce glass of water. As you near lunch time, repeat your breakfast schedule. If your goal is to lose weight, drink more water before meals to give yourself a “full” feeling, which lessens your appetite.

Two hours after lunch have another eight- to sixteen-ounce glass of water. Then thirty minutes before your evening meal drink your next glass. If dinner is your largest meal of the day, try drinking sixteen to twenty-four ounces (or if lunch is your big meal, drink sixteen to twenty-four ounces before then). I predict that you won’t eat as much.

Finally, two hours after dinner have another eight-ounce glass and another before bedtime, unless you have a hiatal hernia, reflux disease, or an enlarged prostate. In those cases, do not drink anything else after dinner.

Is it possible to drink too much water? Yes. There is a psychiatric condition called *psychogenic polydipsia*, which is drinking excessive amounts of water. It can cause potassium and electrolyte levels to become dangerously low.

Water is the first and most important pillar upon which to build a healthy life. The next most important pillar is a good night’s sleep and a little “R&R,” which we will begin tomorrow.

Let me end this section with a recommended blessing you can use to bless your water. Jesus blessed His food and thanked God the Father for it when He was on earth. We too should thank God for everything we take into our bodies and bless it beforehand.

*Thank You for my clean, healing water. Mark 16:18 says that if I drink any deadly thing it shall not harm me. By faith, I thank You for cleansing this water from any toxic chemicals, bacteria, viruses, parasites, etc., and for protecting me supernaturally from any harm. I bless the water according to Exodus 23:25, which says that God shall bless my water and take sickness away from the midst of me.*

*I drink this water with thanksgiving. Because God loves me and desires me to be healthy, I receive this water with gratitude and rejoice as it goes to every cell in my body. As I drink this water, my cells, tissues, and organs are cleansed, strengthened, and renewed like the eagle. I see myself healed, and I keep this vision before my eyes. In the name of Jesus, amen.*

## BUILDING BLOCKS TO A HEALTHY LIFE

**POINTS TO PONDER:** *Don't wait until you are thirsty to drink water. If you wait until you're thirsty, you've waited too long. You're probably already dehydrated. Drink at least two quarts of clean water per day. Drink thirty minutes before meals or two hours after meals. Try not to drink excessive amounts of water past 7:00 p.m. Doing so may interfere with your sleep.*

**ACTION STEP:** *Use the formula on page 31 to figure out how much you should drink based on your body weight (in pounds).*





**PILLAR 2**

**Sleep and  
Rest**

## DAY 8: Restoring Your Body With Sleep

**E**very night when the Walt Disney World theme parks close their gates and the crowds go home, the most important hours of the Disney day begin. Big lights go up, and massive crews of workers repair and clean every ride, every walkway, and every concession stand. When the gates open the next morning, the parks are completely renewed. The trash from the previous day is gone, and the roller coasters are in top condition again.

A similar thing happens every night in your body. During those precious hours your body shuts down and repairs itself. Your immune system recharges. Your major organs are restored. Old cells are being replaced with new ones. Your mind relaxes and orders its thoughts, creating a healthy mental state.

That's why this second pillar of health is wonderful, nourishing, restorative sleep and rest.

### Edge of Collapse

What if Walt Disney World stayed open all night or let people in at 3:00 a.m., cutting short the repair time? The park would eventually be unsafe, unsanitary, and unappealing. It would end up a run-down shadow of itself, careening toward financial disaster and, worse, causing injuries or deaths on rides that were not maintained properly.

Lack of sleep is just as disastrous for you as an individual. A good night's sleep is free. A bad night's sleep is costly, because it takes a toll on your health.

But just as many Americans live in a state of unrecognized dehydration, an estimated fifty to seventy million also live on the brink of mental and physical collapse because of lack of sleep.<sup>2</sup> Researchers found that in one year alone about forty-two million sleeping pill prescriptions were filled for American adults and children.<sup>3</sup> An estimated sixty million Americans suffer from insomnia and other sleep disorders. More than half of all American adults suffer from insomnia at least a few times each week. As

#### Did You Know . . . ?

Getting enough sleep will help you to learn new physical skills. Studies have shown that sleep builds procedural memory. What you practice during the day, you continue to learn while you sleep.<sup>1</sup>



a result, over 50 percent of the American population will experience daytime drowsiness.<sup>4</sup>

It's the same in my practice. The number one complaint I hear from patients who come into my office is, "I'm tired." They slump forward in their chairs, peering at me from under the weight of fatigue. I fear to send some of them out of my office because they don't seem awake enough to drive home!

We live in a world where day and night no longer matter. Thanks to modern technology, we can work and play around the clock. This is not

### Transportation Safety and Sleep Deprivation

When the Exxon Valdez ran aground in 1989, causing \$1.85 billion in damage to the environment, the third mate was at the helm and had slept only six hours in the previous twenty-four.<sup>5</sup>

The crash of Korean Air Flight 801 in 1997 killed 228 people. The cockpit voice recorder picked up the pilot uttering the words "...really...sleepy..." as he made his final approach. The pilot's fatigue was ruled as a major contributor to this tragedy.<sup>6</sup>

the way our bodies or minds were made to operate. God gave us a promise of deep, restorative sleep. Psalm 127:2 (NIV) says, "He grants sleep to those he loves." To those who are tired, He says, "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest" (Matt. 11:28, NIV).

Sleep and rest are so important because of what they do for your health.

1. *Sleep regulates release of important hormones.* When you sleep, growth hormone is secreted. This causes children to grow, and it regulates muscle mass and helps control fat in adults. When you don't sleep enough, this hormone's function is disrupted. Perhaps lack of sleep is partially to blame for the fact that two-thirds of Americans are overweight or obese. Leptin, another hormone, is secreted during sleep and directly influences appetite and weight

control. It tells the body when it is "full." A person who doesn't have enough of this regulating hormone often has a runaway appetite.

2. *Sleep slows the aging process.* The term "beauty rest" is literally true. Sleep slows the aging process, and some say it is one of the most important "secrets" for averting wrinkles. How well a person sleeps is one of the most important predictors of how long a person will live.
3. *Sleep boosts the immune system.* People who sleep nine hours a night instead of seven hours have greater than nor-

mal “natural killer cell” activity. Natural killer cells destroy viruses, bacteria, and cancer cells.

4. *Sleep improves brain function.* One study shows that short-term sleep deprivation may decrease brain activity related to alertness and cognitive performance.<sup>7</sup>
5. *Sleep reduces cortisol levels.* Excessive stress raises cortisol levels, which disrupt neurotransmitter balance in the brain, causing you to be more irritable and prone to depression, anxiety, and insomnia. High cortisol levels are associated with many diseases, but the cure is as close as your pillow. Sufficient sleep helps to reduce cortisol levels.

Good sleep is one of the best “health principles” available to you, and yet relatively few people get adequate sleep. As a society, Americans are chronically sleep deprived. One in six claim that insomnia is a major problem for them. By not sleeping, they degrade and even ruin their health.<sup>8</sup>

### **What Happens When You Don’t Sleep**

The medical research is clear about what happens when you don’t get sufficient sleep.

1. *You increase your risk of developing type 2 diabetes.* One study published by the medical journal *Lancet* revealed that even in young, healthy individuals, a sleep deficit of three to four hours a night over the course of a week affected the body’s ability to process carbohydrates, leading some people into a prediabetic state.<sup>9</sup>
2. *You become clumsy and “sleep drunk.”* Lack of sleep slows your reaction time, shortens your attention span, and impairs your memory, your decision-making process, and your coordination. People who go for up to nineteen hours without sleep score significantly worse on performance and alertness tests than people with a blood alcohol level of .08, which is legally drunk.<sup>10</sup>
3. *You jeopardize your job.* According to the National Commission on Sleep Disorders at the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, Maryland, sleep deprivation costs an estimated \$150 billion a year in higher stress and reduced workplace productivity.<sup>11</sup>



A third of America's adult workers either missed work or made mistakes at work in the past three months because of a lack of sleep.<sup>12</sup> Nobody drinks on the job, but plenty of people come to work after pulling all-nighters or getting too little sleep, thus functioning as if they were drunk.

4. *You endanger your life and the lives of others.* Sleep deprivation is responsible for at least 100,000 crashes and 1,500

fatalities a year, according to a 2002 report from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. Half of Americans admit to driving while drowsy. Studies show huge peaks in the number of accidents caused by people falling asleep at the wheel in the middle of the night and smaller peaks in the middle of the afternoon.<sup>13</sup>

### Sleep Myth FACT or FICTION?

You can “cheat” on the amount of sleep you get.

- Fact  
 Fiction

**Answer: Fiction.** Sleep experts say most adults need between seven and nine hours of sleep each night for optimum performance, health, and safety. When we don't get adequate sleep, we accumulate a sleep debt that can be difficult to “pay back” if it becomes too big. The resulting sleep deprivation has been linked to health problems such as obesity, high blood pressure, negative mood and behavior, decreased productivity, and safety issues in the home, on the job, and on the road.<sup>15</sup>

5. *You reduce your sex drive.* Sleep deprivation raises cortisol levels, which blocks the normal response of the testicles to testosterone and decreases the production of hormonal precursors to testosterone. This is one reason young men in military boot camp generally have a lower sex drive, believe it or not.<sup>14</sup>

6. *You invite diseases.* A host of physical conditions are associated with insomnia, including chronic fatigue, fibromyalgia,

chronic pain syndrome, autoimmune diseases, hypertension, obesity, depression, and other forms of mental illness. Adults with commonly diagnosed health conditions such as high blood pressure, arthritis, heartburn, and depression say they rarely get a good night's sleep, showing an association between sleeplessness and disease. People with these

conditions are nearly twice as likely to experience frequent daytime sleepiness as those who don't have the conditions.<sup>16</sup>

7. *You jeopardize your marriage.* Studies show higher rates of divorce among people who don't get adequate sleep.<sup>17</sup>

Getting the adequate amount of sleep is beneficial to you, and it benefits those around you. The next daily entry will show you the causes of insomnia, and later we will learn about what steps you can take toward getting successful sleep every night.

## BUILDING BLOCKS TO A HEALTHY LIFE

**POINTS TO PONDER:** *A good night's sleep restores, repairs, and rejuvenates your body. Sleep is important because it is vital for your immune system and your overall health. Sleep also slows down the aging process. Lack of adequate sleep increases your risk of developing type 2 diabetes as well as a host of other diseases.*

**ACTION STEP:** *Make sure you get at least seven to nine hours of sleep tonight.*

## DAY 9: What Causes Insomnia

**O**ne time I developed a shoulder injury while lifting weights. During the day the pain was annoying, but I could ignore it. At night the pain became major because every time I tried to sleep, I eventually rolled over on that shoulder and woke up. That went on for months, and I became an unwilling insomniac until the shoulder healed. I felt like a walking zombie!

Many of you know exactly how I felt. Everybody wants to sleep well, but many of us can't, for reasons that range from troubling life situations to physical problems to poor eating habits. If you have difficulty sleeping, you are not alone, but this pillar of health will help you to get the sleep you need regularly.

First, see if any of these common sleep thieves apply to you.

### What's Robbing You of a Good Night's Sleep?

*Stress and anxiety.* By far the biggest cause of insomnia is stress. People lie awake trying to work out their life's problems, mourning the past, and worrying about the future.

#### Did You Know . . . ?

The top three factors that rob women of sleep:

- ▶ Stress related to work or family
- ▶ Ailments such as an allergy or cold
- ▶ Uncomfortable mattress or pillows<sup>1</sup>

*Painful physical conditions.* Arthritis, chronic back pain, tension headaches, degenerative disk disease, bursitis, tendonitis, and virtually any other painful condition can rob an otherwise healthy person of sleep.

*Caffeine.* Many people doom their sleep by consuming caffeine in coffee, soft drinks, chocolate, and over-the-counter headache medicines like Excedrin. Caffeine increases the stress hormones adrenaline and cortisol. Caffeine can remain in the body for up to twenty hours. More than 80 percent of all

Americans consume caffeine regularly, and the average American drinks about three cups of coffee a day. For some people, that's a recipe for sleepless nights.



*A bad mattress or pillow.* Is there anything more frustrating than a mattress that is too saggy or too hard, or an overstuffed pillow?

*A snoring spouse.* My neighbor came to me one day and said, “Please give my husband something to stop his snoring! I can’t even sleep in the same bed anymore. He snores so loud that our kids in the other bedrooms wake up scared in the middle of the night.” Many people feel that desperate. A snoring spouse wrecks many people’s sleep. I’ll share my remedies for snoring in a later section.

*Hot flashes or menstrual cramps.* Women over fifty often know the aggravation of being kept awake by hot flashes or night sweats. Other women have such severe cramping that they become insomniacs every month when their period arrives.

### It’s a Fact

Snorers cause their sleeping partners to lose an average of forty-nine minutes of sleep a night.<sup>3</sup>

*Enlarged prostate.* Some men over fifty find themselves on a there-and-back-again loop to the bathroom when they should be fast asleep.

*Newborn babies.* As welcome as they are, babies can ruin sleep patterns. Breast-feeding mothers know how an active nighttime routine can make their brains and bodies feel like jelly.

*Environment.* Noisy neighbors and their dogs, the room too hot or too cold, bright lights shining through your bedroom window, or trucks, planes, trains, or motorcycles passing by can all disrupt sleep patterns.

Each of these sleep thieves is responsible for countless hours of lost sleep, lost productivity, lost creativity, and lost mental health. Today we identified the main things that rob you of sleep. Tomorrow we will talk about how much sleep you need as we begin building sleep patterns on this pillar of health.

## BUILDING BLOCKS TO A HEALTHY LIFE

**POINTS TO PONDER:** *Insomnia affects many people, robbing them of sleep—and, in the long run, good health. Some causes of insomnia are stress, anxiety, depression, chronic pain, caffeine, and medications. Be careful not to eat sugary or high-processed foods before bedtime because they may cause low blood sugar, which makes it difficult for you to sleep.*

**ACTION STEP:** *Discover which factors are affecting your sleep (stress, pain, caffeine, a snoring spouse, a bad mattress or pillow, a noisy environment, a warm bedroom, etc.).*



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