***Hydration is the key to weight (FAT) loss.***

***Mark Harris, PhD***  
  
Proper hydration has long been regarded as an essential key to weight loss, but the ideal amount that you should consume is often in debate. Because water is inexpensive and easier to come by than many other weight loss methods, however, any reasons that suggest it may aid in weight loss are not taken lightly by those struggling to maintain an optimal weight. Various explanations exist for why hydration is so important.  
***Importance of Water***  
  
Almost two thirds of the human body is made up of water. Its roles include everything from removing waste to regulating body temperature to lubricating joints, just to name a few. Water also acts as a natural appetite suppressant and aids in metabolism. With all these functions, the consumption of water is vital to the normal functioning of the body.  
  
***Effects of Dehydration***  
  
A lack of water consumption can be detrimental to your body. If your hydration levels drop by only 2 percent, you may experience fuzzy thoughts, lack of concentration and difficulty focusing visually. If you often feel fatigued in the middle of the day and cannot figure out why, dehydration is likely the culprit, which in turn makes exercise difficult to perform. When you are not properly hydrated, you may also feel a burning sensation in your stomach that is similar to hunger pangs. This feeling can mistakenly lead you to unnecessary calorie consumption. It has also been linked to increased risk of cancer, premature aging, irritability, anxiety and numerous other ailments. Links have even been made between chronic dehydration and obesity.  
  
***How Water Aids Weight Loss***  
  
According to Revive Your Life, a study conducted at the University of Washington found that drinking one 8-oz. glass of water eliminated midnight hunger pangs in 98 percent of the subjects, thus decreasing caloric intake from midnight snacks. Water may also cause an increase in energy, allowing you to push harder through those workouts. "The Journal of Clinical Endocrinology and Metabolism" published a study in 2003 examining the thermogenic effect of water. Researchers led by Michael Boschmann found that consuming 16 oz. of water caused a 30 percent increase in metabolism, mostly attributable to the body warming the water to body temperature.  
  
SO DRINK YOUR WATER COLD BECAUSE THE BODY WILL NEED TO WORK HARDER AND BURN MORE CALORIES HEATING THE COLD WATER TO KEEP YOU AT 98.6 DEGREES. YES....COLD WATER HELPS YOU BURN MORE CALORIES!!!!  
  
***Effects from other drinks that include SUGAR & CAFFEINE***  
  
Pure water is the most beneficial form of liquid to consume. Sugary drinks contain empty calories, plus they can cause your body to struggle to absorb the water it needs. Caffeinated drinks can be even more damaging due to caffeine's diuretic effect, causing the amount of excretion of water from the body to be elevated.   
Sodas even just one a day can add as much as 10 pounds of excess weight to your body in just one year. Those 10 pounds will be 100% FAT.  
  
***Recommendations***  
  
The debate of exactly how much water should be consumed continues. You can make your own educated judgment based on the facts. Each day we exhale about two cups of water as water vapor. Normal daily perspiration causes about two cups of water to be lost. The intestines and kidneys utilize about six cups of water each day for normal functioning. That totals ten cups. When you add exercise to that, you increase the minimum amount of water you need just for daily functions. And for weight loss benefits, tack on a couple more cups to that total.  
  
Those of you on high protein diets need even more water to keep your renal system hydrated to aid you in keeping uric acid levels in check. The only way our bodies can dump uric acid (a protein waste byproduct) is through your kidneys. Improper hydration of the kidney causes severe stress and will result in painful uric acid kidney stones, gout and arthritis.   
  
I believe an active person on high protein needs no less than one gallon of water daily to maintain proper hydration levels and healthy renal system.