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Reinventing Water

### Chlorine. Friend or Foe?

With the specter of the Walkerton tragedy lurking as a not so distant memory, a recent national study asked Canadians how confident they felt with their water. Canadians were, generally, fairly pleased with the quality of their drinking water. When asked what troubled them about their water, answers ranged from taste and smell to concerns about chemical additives, agricultural run-off and contamination from industrial waste.

According to this study, the most common cause of complaint among Canadians was chlorine. Reasons for adverse reactions to this additive were based on concerns over flavour and odour as well as concern over long-term health effects.

Canada has been chlorinating its water supplies for over one hundred years. It is through this treatment method that we have been able to virtually wipe out water-borne diseases such as cholera and typhoid fever.

It is what lies beneath the surface of the population's concerns over taste and odour that has sparked heated debate. Debate centered on the safety of chlorine with respect to its potential as a carcinogen. Chlorine has been linked to cancers, miscarriages, heart disease, asthma and premature aging.

According to the U.S. Council of Environmental Quality, "Cancer risk among people drinking chlorinated water is 93% higher than among those whose water does not contain chlorine." When chlorine is added to water, it combines with other natural compounds to form Trihalomethanes (or THMs). These chlorine byproducts initiate the production of free radicals in the body, causing cell damage, and are highly carcinogenic.

The Health Canada Website states, "Lab animals exposed to very high levels of THMs have an increased risk of cancer. Several studies on humans have also found a link between long-term exposure to high levels of chlorination by-products and a higher risk of cancer. For instance, a recent study showed an increased risk of bladder and possibly colon cancer in people who drank chlorinated



water for 35 years or more. High levels of THMs may also have an effect on pregnancy. A California study found that pregnant women who drank large amounts of tap water with high THMs had an increased risk of miscarriage." In fact, at least ten major peer-reviewed epidemiological studies, including a Canadian study by Dalhousie University, have shown elevated risks of birth defects and miscarriages for women drinking chlorinated tap water. Breast cancer, which now affects one in every eight women in North America, has recently been linked to the accumulation of chlorine compounds in the breast tissue. A study carried out in Hartford Connecticut, the first of its kind in North America, found that "women with breast cancer have 50% to 60% higher levels of organochlorines (chlorination byproducts) in their breast tissue than women without breast cancer."

Dr. Joseph Price wrote a highly controversial book in the late sixties titled "Coronaries/Cholesterol/Chlorine" and concluded that nothing can negate the indisputable fact, the base cause of atherosclerosis and resultant ailments such as heart attacks and stroke, is chlorine.

Dr. Price later headed up a study using chickens as test subjects, where two groups of several hundred birds were observed from hatching through to maturity. One group was given water with chlorine and the other without. When autopsied, every specimen of the group raised with chlorine showed some level of heart or circulatory disease, the group without had no incidence of disease. The group with chlorine under winter conditions showed outward signs of poor circulation, shivering, drooped feathers and a reduced level of activity. The group without chlorine grew faster, larger and displayed vigorous health. This study was well received in the poultry industry and is still used as a reference today. As a result, most large poultry producers use dechlorinated water.

One of the most shocking components to all of these studies is that up to two thirds of our harmful exposure to chlorine is due to inhalation of steam and skin absorption while showering. A warm shower opens up the pores of the skin and allows for accelerated absorption of chlorine and other chemicals in water. Inhalation is a much more harmful means of exposure since the chlorine gas (chloroform) we inhale goes directly into our blood stream.

When we drink contaminated water the toxins are partially filtered out by our kidneys and digestive system. Chlorine vapors are known to be a strong irritant to the sensitive tissue and bronchial passages inside our lungs. In fact, it was used as a chemical weapon in World

War II. The inhalation of chlorine is a suspected cause of asthma and bronchitis, especially in children, that has increased 300% in the last two decades.

Chlorine in shower water also has a very negative cosmetic effect, stripping skin and hair of moisture and elasticity, resulting in a less radiant and youthful appearance.

The good news is that chlorine is one of the easiest substances to remove from water. There are many types of water filtration systems available for whole home usage or for drinking water or shower specific applications. Health Canada cautions, however, "the manufacture and sale of water treatment devices are not regulated

in Canada. Health Canada recommends the use of products that are certified to health-based standards. The Standards Council of Canada can provide information on the certification process."

Chlorination is an inexpensive and effective means of sanitizing water supplies. Even municipalities that use alternative methods of disinfection, such as ozonation or ultra-violet technologies, chlorinate water to keep it from picking up pathogens while it travels through pipelines from the treatment plant. To protect ourselves from its inherent dangers, our only real option is to filter out chlorine once it has reached our homes.

## WATER TONICS

### Ginseng and Licorice Tea

This tea is meant to tonify the blood and to increase energy. Ginseng and licorice are two of the most universally utilized botanicals. Each is credited with diverse capabilities. Licorice is said to mitigate and harmonize the characteristics of other herbs due to its "sweet, neutral and moderating properties", while ginseng is used to help to keep the body in balance.

Licorice has been used for over 3,000 years as a tonic to rejuvenate the heart and spleen, and as a treatment for ulcers, cold symptoms, and skin disorders. Contemporary herbalists often prescribe licorice in treating irregularities and diseases of the adrenal glands, counteracting stress, and in purifying the liver and bloodstream. It is used to soothe mucous membranes, and as an expectorant in treating flu, colds, respiratory disorders and bronchitis. Extracts of licorice are used in Japan as an antiviral to treat chronic hepatitis and in therapies for stomach ulcers.

Ginseng is one of the most popular healing herbs used today throughout the world. It increases mental and physical efficiency and resistance to stress and disease. The main active ingredients of ginseng are called "ginsenosides". These steroid-like ingredients provide the properties that enable ginseng to balance and counter the effects of stress.

Drink this tea to relax and to fortify the body. It is important to remember, however, that both ginseng and licorice are extremely potent medicines. Consulting an herbalist, naturopath or medical doctor before beginning any therapies that include these herbs on an on-going basis is highly recommended.

#### The Tea:

- 1 teaspoon Ground Siberian Ginseng
- 1 5 cm (2") piece of Licorice Root
- 250 ml Boiling, filtered water

Place herbs in a cup and cover with boiling water. Allow to steep for at least 10 minutes. Remove the licorice root from the mixture. Drink this tea as needed to help restore energy throughout the day.

## YOUR BODY OF WATER

### Why Drinking Water Really is the Key to Weight Loss

Trying to lose weight? We have all heard the mantra that drinking eight or more glasses of water a day is vital to waistline reduction. We know that water can help to curb appetite and that it somehow works to flush out toxins, but how does pure water work to help rid our bodies of excess fat?

On the surface, it might seem that the bladder, kidneys and liver are distinct organs fulfilling individual functions. In reality, they work in conjunction, performing the very essential task of elimination of the body's toxins and waste products.

Every day, a person's kidneys may filter 200 litres of blood to extract about 2 liters of waste and water. These are passed as urine. Dehydration causes this system to become less efficient. When the kidneys cannot do their job effectively, the liver is forced to pick up the slack. This is bad news when you are trying to lose weight. According to the American Liver Foundation, "The liver performs many unique and important metabolic tasks as it processes carbohydrates, proteins, fats and minerals to be used in maintaining normal body functions."

Primary among these functions are regulation of blood cholesterol and metabolization of fat. Experts stress that, "If the kidneys are water-deprived, the liver has to do their work along with its own, lowering its total productivity. It then can't metabolize fat as quickly or efficiently as it could when the kidneys were pulling their own weight."

Furthermore, fat-soluble toxins, such as pesticides and other agricultural and environmental waste, can accumulate in your liver, impeding its ability to function. Trace amounts of these toxins are picked up everywhere through absorption through the skin or through consumption of contaminated food or water. When this happens, the liver works less effectively, burning less fat. Mild and frequent detoxification is extremely beneficial for weight loss. Consuming enough clean, fresh water aids in this detoxification.

Liver specialist, Dr. Sandra Cabot emphasizes that, "if the liver does not regulate fat metabolism efficiently, weight gain tends to occur around the abdominal area and a protuberant abdomen (potbelly) will develop." She also claims that, "this is often a sign of a fatty liver. It can be almost impossible to lose this abdominal fat until the liver function is improved. Once this is done the liver will start burning fat efficiently again and the weight comes off gradually."

Experts also advise that with this gradual style of weight loss, a 'plateau' may occur. The rate at which weight is being lost may cease or diminish for weeks. This apparent lack of gratification can be a source of great frustration to individuals in the process of shifting lifestyle. Dr. Cabot cautions that fat loss may be occurring within the liver itself. When the liver clears, it will metabolize fat far more efficiently. The implications for weight loss are unmistakable. Drinking plenty of pure water can help to flush away those extra pounds.



## ALTERNATIVE HEALTH FILE

### Biography Fereydoon Batmanghelidj M.D.

Fereydoon Batmanghelidj, M.D. (1931-2004) was born in Iran. Fereydoon attended Fettes College in Scotland and was a graduate of St. Mary's Hospital Medical School of London University, where he studied under Sir Alexander Fleming. His research in the field of Gastroenterology, and subsequent books garnered much media coverage.

He wrote *Your Body's Many Cries for Water* in 1992, the result of the author's research into the effects on the human body, of even moderate dehydration. The primary theory espoused is that thirst is only one of a host of means by which the body expresses need for water. Dr. Batmanghelidj hypothesizes that an array of diseases begin as alternative indications of dehydration. These illnesses include asthma, angina, dyspepsia, and obesity, as well as many others.

In 1979 when the Iranian Revolution broke out, Dr. Batmanghelidj was placed in Evin Prison as a political prisoner for two years and seven months. It was during this time that he uncovered the medicinal potential of water. One night, the doctor had to care for a fellow inmate with debilitating peptic ulcer pain. Because he had no available medications, Dr. Batmanghelidj gave the prisoner two glasses of water. Within eight minutes, the pain had disappeared. The prisoner was then instructed to drink two glasses of water every three hours. He continued pain free for his remaining four months in the prison.

While in prison he conducted extensive research into the therapeutic properties of water in preventing and relieving many excruciating degenerative diseases. On his release from prison in 1982, Dr. Batmanghelidj escaped from Iran and fled to America, where he continued his research into the effects of chronic unintentional dehydration on the human body. His findings were published in the Foundation's "Journal of Science in Medicine Simplified" in 1991 and 1992.

Dr. F. Batmanghelidj devoted the last 20 years of his life to advancing public awareness regarding the curative abilities of water. He appeared on radio and television programs and lectured internationally. He has left a body of work that includes six books and more than a dozen educational audio and video seminars. The doctor's prescription is quite simple. If people drank more water they would be a lot healthier.