

Welcome to March,

Oh, spring is on its way even though it is snowing outside my window right now. ☺ It has been so great seeing so many of you at the Y. Good job. Keep up the good work!

In this newsletter, the big story is all about drinking water. Since you know how much I encourage that, please read the article. It is actually telling you that you might not need as much as has been understood. Check it out, but before you get there let me share some info with you on cancellations and parking at the Y.

If you have to cancel an appointment on the day it is scheduled, please call both the Y and my office. Most of the time I will be at the Y but you might get lucky and catch me at the house. Phone numbers are: Y = 482-9622, office = 482-1887. If you call the Y, expect to leave a message with someone at the front desk. They will write down your message and put it in my folder. I will find it when I next look in the folder or when someone from the front desk tells me you have called. The front desk workers are really good at telling me that there is a message awaiting me. Remember also, which you are doing a great job with, that to avoid paying for the hour, cancel 24 hours in advance. Thanks for all your support.

Let's look at parking at the Y. It has gotten even harder since Gold's Gym closed, but please realize that your walk from the car to the Fitness Room can be used as part of your warm up. Exercise happens not just inside the Y but in all things we do.

I spoke with Lisa Molner, the director of the Y, and she said that she has seen people wait in their cars for a good 10 minutes for a front door parking space. Lisa's office window is right there and she sees it happen often. Remember there are five parking lots and if you have to park at the one furthest away, use the walk up to the Y as part of your warm up. Also notice that Monday, Wednesday and Fridays seem to be the most popular days of the week at the Y. Tuesday and Thursdays don't have as many cars and therefore not as many people in the Fitness Room. If parking is a big issue for you, think about changing your day or time of working out.

Below is an article on water consumption from the New York Times. I've included the information on salt also in case you are interested. Enjoy.

**February 17, 2004**

**PERSONAL HEALTH**

New York Times

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**Must I Have Another Glass of Water? Maybe Not, a New Report Says**

**By JANE E. BRODY**

You may not have to drink eight glasses of water a day to be well hydrated, and you can count caffeinated beverages in your total water intake, according to a new report from the

Institute of Medicine, the group that sets desirable levels of nutrient intake for Americans of all ages.

The report, issued last week, reviewed the status of water, salt and potassium consumption by Americans and Canadians and set desirable intake levels for these nutrients.

### Healthful Drinking

The expert panel that prepared the report found that women who appeared to be adequately hydrated consumed the equivalent of about 91 ounces of fluids each day, and men about 125 ounces. That is actually more than eight glasses (64 ounces). But only 80 percent of it came from drinking water; the rest came from other beverages, and from foods...

Dr. Lawrence Appel of the Johns Hopkins University, who headed the panel, explained, "While drinking water is a frequent choice for hydration, people also get water from juice, milk, coffee, tea, soda, fruits, vegetables and other foods and beverages, as well." No mention was made of alcohol, however, which increases the body's water needs.

Although caffeine, as a diuretic, increases the excretion of urine, it does not lead to a deficiency of body water, the panel concluded, suggesting that the effect is fleeting.

Furthermore, Dr. Appel said, "People get adequate amounts of water from normal drinking behavior — consumption of beverages at meals and in other social situations — and by letting their thirst guide them.

How can you tell if you are getting enough water? Clearly, if you are thirsty, you need to drink more. Likewise, if your skin is shriveled, if you are prone to muscle cramps or if you are chronically constipated, chances are you are not drinking enough.

There is no harm in drinking more water than recommended, as long as you do not go overboard on it. Athletes who drink too much water without also replacing the salts lost in sweat, for example, can have health problems like abnormal heart rhythms.

On the other hand, drinking more water may help curb runaway obesity. Every good weight-loss program recommends drinking a glass of water (or an equivalent beverage) before and with every meal, since it both fills you up and improves digestion.

### Too Much Salt

The panel, formed under an arm of the National Academy of Sciences, found that Americans typically consume far too much sodium chloride, or salt. In some cases, the consumption runs as high as three times the amount needed for good health, or even higher.

The average man takes in 7.8 grams to 11.8 grams of salt each day, and the average woman consumes 5.8 to 7.8 grams, figures that the panel regards as underestimates because they do not include salt added at the table.

How much salt should people eat? For healthy adults 19 to 50, the desirable level is 3.8 grams of salt (about two-thirds of a teaspoon, or 1,500 milligrams of sodium) daily, the amount needed to replace what is lost in sweat.

For an upper limit, the panel set 5.8 grams of salt a day (a little more than one teaspoon), but noted that this was not a desirable amount. The panel said that more than 95 percent of American men and 75 percent of American women ages 31 to 50 regularly consumed salt in excess of the upper limit established by the group.

Consuming too much salt, which means too much sodium, increases the risk of developing high blood pressure, which can in turn lead to strokes, heart attacks and kidney disease. Blood pressure tends to rise in direct relationship to the amount of sodium a person consumes.

Some people are especially sensitive to the harmful effects of salt, including the elderly, African-Americans and people with chronic diseases like hypertension, diabetes and kidney disease, the panel noted.

An appetite for salt is an acquired taste, since anthropological evidence strongly suggests that humans evolved on a diet low in sodium and rich in potassium.

Our vegetarian ancestors consumed less than a gram of salt a day and even heavy meat eaters took in only about 4 grams on good hunting days.

Currently, more than three-fourths of the salt in the American and Canadian diets comes from prepared and processed convenience foods, including those bought from vending machines, snack bars and restaurants.

Enough sodium is naturally present in foods and beverages to meet the body's need for it. Only those who labor or exercise strenuously for long periods in hot weather are likely to need more sodium than a natural diet provides.

Thus, anyone who loses six or more pounds in a workout should replace some of the lost salt, along with water.

When it comes to sodium and potassium, modern food producers and vendors have sabotaged our natural metabolic processes.

Since we evolved in a low-sodium environment, our bodies are designed to hang on to however much sodium they can get.

But since potassium was plentiful in the early human diet, evolution built in a mechanism for releasing potassium to protect against a hazardous excess, which can cause abnormal heart rhythms and muscular paralysis.

There you have it according to that report. I hope this is informative and helpful for you.

Have a wonderful March and I look forward to seeing you soon.  
Thank you so much for taking the time to nurture yourself!

Carol Lee