

Alkaline Water, Fact or Fiction?

Alkaline water seems to be the newest trend in health. Is it really what fans claim it to be? Is it the cure it all remedy? To fully understand this claim, it is worth learning about pH and how our bodies work.

Alkaline refers to the pH scale. This scale goes from 0 to 14 with 7 being neutral. Anything below 7 is acidic; anything above 7 is basic or alkaline. Tap water has a range of 6.5 to 8.5 depending on the source of the water, pipe material and disinfection method used. So depending on your where your water comes from, you may already be drinking slightly alkaline water.

The concept of alkaline water came from the fact that cancer cells cannot survive in an alkaline environment. The tissue surrounding the cancer cells is slightly acidic, so changing its surroundings should help correct? Unfortunately it is not that easy. Our bodies keep a pretty tight control the pH of our body, between 7.4 and 7.6.

Any significant increase or decrease could make you very sick and possibly cause death. In other words, no food or drink will significantly change the pH of your body. Your lungs and kidneys will make sure that does not happen.

Additionally, your stomach secretes acid to digest food and to



kill bacteria and parasites you may have ingested. When the partially digested food moves to the intestine, there are more secretions that make the partially digested food more alkaline. All the food you eat and drink end up having the same pH regardless of their original pH prior to ingestion.

If you drink alkaline water, the only effect you will have is on the pH of your urine, and if you have any problems with your kidneys, you should check with your doctor before even trying it.

Other side effects may be indigestion and infections from making the environment in your stomach less acidic.

You may also have problems absorbing many nutrients like vitamin B12, magnesium and calcium, among others.

Another interesting fact is the alkaline or acidic diet. An alkaline diet has many benefits to our health, but it is likely because it is rich in fruits, vegetables and whole grains and it is low on simple sugars and meats. A plant based diet has been proven to reduce the risk of chronic disease but it is not because of the pH of the food.

In other words, drinking alkaline water will not prevent or cure cancer or any other disease. Prevention comes from healthy and active lifestyles. Focus on a plant based diet, adequate hydration and 30 minutes of daily physical activity, limit alcohol consumption and do not smoke.