

Water: The One Longevity Tool Youâ??re Not Yet OptimizingÂ

5 MIN READ

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Auditing your water is free and takes less than ten minutes. This simple practice is missing from your longevity routine.Â

Macros, calories, reps, sleep, supplements, and steps â?? youâ??ve probably analyzed them all. But when was the last time you thought about water?Â

Itâ??s possibly your last *untapped* longevity hack. (Sorry, we had to do it.) **Research** shows that people who stay well hydrated live longer, happier lives.

You donâ??t need tons of time or money to audit your H2O. Weâ??ve got you covered with a three-step, 10-minute water audit to ensure nothingâ??s holding you back from optimal hydration. But first, pour yourself a glass of water as we dig into the science behind its benefits.Â

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Staying Hydrated Slows Aging

Thereâ??s a good chance you donâ??t drink enough water. In fact, estimates suggest that 75% of U.S. adults are â??**chronically dehydrated**.â?• Thatâ??s concerning, given that maintaining hydration is important for memory, digestion, heart health, and energy.Â

But there's more. A **2023 study** published in the journal *eBioMedicine*, which included almost 30-years of data from 11,255 adults, also found that staying hydrated supports healthy aging. As a marker of dehydration, the researchers measured blood sodium levels which rise when you don't drink enough fluids and looked at the health and aging impact of higher levels.

Normally, blood sodium levels fall between 135 and 145 milliequivalents per liter (mEq/L). The findings showed that people with levels above 142 mEq/L have:

- **64%** increased chronic disease risk
- **50%** higher odds of being older than their chronological age
- **21%** chance of premature death (above 144 mEq/L)

This doesn't mean that simply drinking more water will extend your life, according to **Saravanan Thangarajan, MDS, MMSc, MBA**, a global health systems and implementation advisor and research associate at the Lakshmi Mittal and Family South Asia Institute at Harvard University, who was not involved in the study.

"I would be careful with the common advice to drink more water for longevity. The goal is not to drink the most water. It is to have enough safe water, consistently, over a lifetime," he told Super Age in an email.

The study found that people with blood sodium levels between 138 and 140 mEq/L had the lowest risk of premature death and chronic disease, suggesting that you don't need to chug water for these benefits.

It is possible to overhydrate, especially for athletes and people with certain kidney disorders. While most people don't need to worry, **overhydration** can cause blood sodium levels to drop too low, leading to nausea, confusion, seizures, and coma. As with many things in life, balance is key.

The Audit: Do You Consistently Drink

Enough Safe Water?

With that in mind, it's time to audit your water to determine if you drink an adequate amount and, if not, to diagnose why.

Step 1: Figure out what's in your water.

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regularly issues water quality reports called Consumer Confidence Reports (CCRs). You can find your own local water report by visiting the [CCR website](#). Enter your state, water system name, and/or city, town, or county to find your provider's information. Some, but not all, water systems have a link to their CCR. For example, here is the [2025 CCR](#) for Nashville, Tennessee.

You may need to contact your local utility provider directly if you can't find your CCR on the EPA website. And if you are on a well, it's a slightly different process.

Private wells are not routinely monitored under the same federal system as public drinking water. The CDC recommends testing well water at least annually for total coliform bacteria, nitrate, total dissolved solids, and pH, with additional testing based on local conditions," Thangarajan said.

Step 2: Ask yourself if you *like* drinking your water.

You can't stay hydrated, live longer, and prevent chronic diseases if you don't actually drink water. Think about what's holding you back from refilling one of the many reusable water bottles you bought on a whim. For many people, it's **the taste**: if your tap water has a chemical or metallic taste, you might not want to drink it.

Trust is also a factor. **Research** has shown that some people in the U.S. avoid tap water because they don't trust that it is safe or high quality. If you don't trust your water supply, you may turn to non-water beverages, like soda or juice, to quench your thirst.

Step 3: Decide if you drink enough.

Despite the age-old advice to drink 8 cups of water each day, that's not the right amount for everyone every day.

How much water you need depends on your age, sex, climate, altitude, physical activity levels, and health status. **Nutrition experts** recommend that women consume about 11.5 cups per day and that men get 15.5 cups of water each day from food and fluids.

Look at your urine for guidance — if it's pale yellow, you are probably drinking enough.

Remember step 2? Your urine might look darker if you don't trust or like the taste of your tap water. **Studies** have shown that water filters increase the chance that people will turn on the tap and drink the water.

You Completed the Audit. Now What?

After auditing your water, take a moment to review the quality report. If it's clean and you enjoy the taste of your water, you're good to go. Drink up.

If a contaminant is reported, consider buying a water filter. You can review the **NSF/ANSI certification** to confirm the filter actually helps remove this contaminant.

The word "certified" by itself is not enough. Look at the actual contaminant-reduction claim.

PFAS is a good example. EPA recommends looking for appropriate NSF/ANSI 53 or 58 certification for PFAS reduction, but EPA also notes that current certification standards do not necessarily demonstrate reduction all the way down to its newer federal drinking-water limits," Thangarajan said.

Even if your water is clean, it's important to do something about it if you don't like the taste. Infusing your water with herbs and fresh fruit can help improve the taste and appeal. **Water filters**, especially pitchers and those built into refrigerators, are another good option. These often use carbon filters to improve how your water tastes while helping you reach your hydration and healthspan goals.

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