

Do I Need Fancy Water?



The current time is 9:47 AM—I am paralyzed in front of the beverage cooler at my local C Town Supermarket trying to figure out which of the thousand bottles of water I'm staring at will hydrate me best. Here is alkaline water, there is Smartwater, plus a row of mineral-enriched water, right next to Diddy Water (Aqua Hydrate). It is easy to be cynical of any decanted H₂O that costs more than a dollar 99, especially since it is free.99 to most homeowners and their dogs, but we are living in the Age of Wellness. You and I are but two decaying husks, looking for an elixir. Maybe hydrogen water will do the trick.

As much as I'd love to grab a Poland Spring and call it a day, my hand is beckoned by ergonomically-shaped bottles covered in health jargon. I've begun perusing bottled water with the scrutiny of a gemologist: All of them do different things, I think, but what *are* those things? Let's investigate together:

Do I need hydrogen water?

Excellent question. First of all, I think the return to water as the original healing substance—instead of ingestible collagen, or restrictive cleanse diets, or mud, Shailene Woodley!—is genius. Since antiquity, hydrotherapy has been used to treat everything from alcoholism to immunity. Sebastian Kneipp, the bath oil king and one of the early champions of hydrotherapy, built a legacy on treating peasants, Popes, and Archduke Franz Ferdinand with his specific brand of accessible water-based healing. On the cosmetic side, it's the oldest trick in the book: "I drink 300 litres of water a day," says every woman we've ever interviewed. She catches the natural light, and the sun rises over her poreless skin like the calm Pacific. "That, and I exercise."

If water is the silver bullet to all of your skincare worries, Dr. Perricone's Hydrogen Water is a platinum harpoon. It's a hydrogen-rich version of regular water, it's very big in Japan, and it tastes like metal. Perricone water has yet to undergo clinical testing, but tons of studies back up claims of wrinkle prevention, increased antioxidant activity, and mice anti-obesity among a sea of other promising studies across all bodily functions.

I liken Dr. Perricone's Hydrogen Water to a kind of supplement—the good doctor himself drinks three cans a day, but I've taken to shotgunning one in the morning and again right before bed. Since most of the benefits are occurring on the molecular level, I cannot discern a marked change in how I'm feeling day to day. But I like the simplicity of super-charged water as an alternative to taking a handful of vitamins, so I'm going to stick with it for now. The full benefits, which you can browse [here](#), are truly staggering. Yes, you need hydrogen water. Go get some right now!! I will wait.

When I met alkaline water, I was 15 minutes into a very focused infrared sweat (and episode of *House of Cards*) at [Los Angeles' Shape House](#). The kind, nurselike employees whose job is to facilitate and encourage perspiration served it to me bedside in large carafes with a straw. It tasted like garbage, but when you are losing thousands of liters of fluids every minute to a riveting political drama and the sweet embrace of a heated blanket, you drink it like it's Diet Coke.

Alkaline water has a pH of above 8, whereas tap water (and most of the water we consume) is pH neutral at around 7. Alkaline diets are recommended to balance out acidic diets, which can wreak havoc on your heart and esophagus and make you feel generally unwell. Essentia, a bodega staple sold alongside Fiji and Smartwater, has a pH of 9.5, making it very basic. You know what else is basic? Regular water. No offense to water, but it is maybe the most basic thing I can think of. The default pH, bottled or tapped or soda'ed, is fine, but if for some reason it is not, I will alert the news media immediately.

Do I need Voss?

I know in my heart that I don't, but that bottle! Add to cart. And while you're at it, please write the slogan for Voss' new fruit sparkling waters ("No to calories, yes to flavor") on my gravestone.

Do I need mineral water?

Yet another fabulous question. The FDA defines the label "mineral water" as containing over 250 ppm (parts per million) of mineral content. This normally presents itself as calcium or magnesium, and both are great for you—calcium fortifies bones and magnesium is known to be a heart-healthy. Water with a high concentration of these minerals is known as "hard water," a spooky term for a good dietary supplement. Apparently it corrodes kettles, or something, but I don't think that's an issue here.

The most popular brand of mineral water is historic San Pellegrino, a brand of fancy water I completely endorse. Not only does it strengthen your body from the inside, but stocking San Pellegrino in your home is a very sly way to let guests know you are both classy and loaded. If you enjoy the primal sensation that comes with drinking water exclusively "from the source" but do not possess the funds required to commit to this lifestyle, I would love to suggest Crystal Geyser, with the caveat that it is spring water and not mineral water. The difference is thrilling—you can read [about it here](#).

Do I need electrolyte-rich water?

You do if you're an athlete: Bottled water with added electrolytes is formulated to aid your body's absorption process, so it's arguably the most hydrating. In addition to being a monument for the digital wellness movement, [this recipe for electrolyte water](#) on Dr. Oz's website looks like it tastes gross. Smartwater tastes divine and comes in several hangover-friendly sizes. Please don't make your own water.

Do I need 24-karat gold water?

My hunch is no, but I'd love to try it. If you or a loved one is a publicist who represents Acqua di Cristallo, please reach out to me as soon as possible. I'm parched.

—Brennan Kilbane

Photographed by Tom Newton.

But is it healthy? [Figure it out here](#).

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Lux Lisbon 2 • 2 months ago

At Whole Foods, even on meager pay checks and employee discounts, we cashiers always sprung for that electrolyte water (or that gross coconut water, as was the fashion).

2 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›


Yuu Smith → Lux Lisbon 2 • 2 months ago

I'd like a "Secret Life of a Whole Foods Employee" series.

29 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›


ihaveacooch • 2 months ago

pass me my poland spring

10 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›


thebookofjennasis • 2 months ago

this post further confirms that I need to start drinking more of the good stuff and I really don't know why it's so hard for me. is it because it's too bland? I always feel full afterwards? I have to go to the bathroom every 5 minutes? I guess the positives outweigh the negatives. ~catch me at the water cooler after I finish this post~

also, HOW METAL-Y is Perricone's Hydrogen Water? \m/ seriously tho, I get freaked out by that taste.

1 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›


Lux Lisbon 2 → thebookofjennasis • 2 months ago

Ooh, it's metallic? I'm suddenly interested (I yearn for the cold iron tasting water of my Catholic school drinking fountain days.)

8 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›


cat → thebookofjennasis • 2 months ago

It grosses me out how because water tastes like nothing, you can taste everything else??? Like it feels like I can taste the plastic of my cup or something I don't know. I'm basically over it and can drink water now but as a kid I refused to drink it at all because of this.

Also the constant bathroom breaks aren't great either BUT once I started drinking enough water I realized my constant nausea was partially due to dehydration! So there's that.

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thebookofjennasis → cat • 2 months ago

i've had a headache for the past couple of days and it's definitely due to dehydration so i am forcing myself to chug!

^ | v • Reply • Share ›


Sarah Martin → cat • 2 months ago

I bought a BKR (glass) water bottle and that has helped me the most when it comes to avoiding the water tasting weird!

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Julia → cat • 2 months ago

I read somewhere that pure H₂O is actually an uncomfortable taste for most people for exactly the reason you listed - it has no taste! Which is why nearly all bottled and tap water has added minerals or electrolytes. More for our fickle sense of taste than health benefit.

^ | v • Reply • Share ›


Abby • 2 months ago

I'm going to say this as someone who drinks kombucha on the daily, so grain of salt: No, you do not.

8 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›


808kate → Abby • 2 months ago

My eyes are rolling into the back of my head on the relevance of these "studies" of "hydrogen water" (redundant???) but I'm mostly made of la croix so

7 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›


LaSaraLang → 808kate • 2 months ago

Mine too. :)))

^ | v • Reply • Share ›



Shannon · 2 months ago

What is hydrogen water? Is it regular water with little hydrogen ions floating around in it? Hydrogen ions are what gives acidic things their low pH, so wouldn't hydrogen water be the diametric opposite of what is touted right below it, alkaline water? If you drink both in close succession, aren't you basically mixing mentos and pepsi and are bound to turn into a 7 year olds science experiment? So many questions on this one.

2 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



DrAlexStreet → Shannon · 2 months ago

When I saw this I automatically thought of 'heavy water' which isn't dangerous/poisonous if not overconsumed, but is kind of a weird thing to drink. Or maybe they infuse normal water with hydrogen ions the way they do to make hydrogenated oils (but as it's water, it's not inflammatory or artery-clogging of course!)

^ | v · Reply · Share ›



ElizaBG · 2 months ago

Oh man, this really bums me out. Think about how much waste bottled water produces! I'm disappointed that ITG would post such a blatantly un-green article.

10 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



Anna Stevenett Glossier → ElizaBG · 2 months ago

Hi Eliza! Would never intend to promote needless waste! We were primarily interested in finding out about the various kinds of water on the market and how they differ from the tap water we drink everyday.

^ | v · Reply · Share ›



ElizaBG → Anna Stevenett · 2 months ago

Thanks for your response, Anna. I am an avid reader of ITG but am extremely anti-bottled water, hence my strong opinion!

4 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



Kim · 2 months ago

Please stop buying bottled water!

You know what neutralizes basic or acidic water, as soon as you drink it? Your stomach.

14 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



Kelly → Kim · 2 months ago

So it's all marketing??

1 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



femmemuse · 2 months ago

I'm personally a Mountain Valley Spring water girl, (it has the most addictive taste, imo). But I've also heard Essentia and Penta do wonders. I'm questioning my sanity as I write this.

2 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



Laura → femmemuse · 2 months ago

I've been drinking Penta water since high school & I LOVE IT.

^ | v · Reply · Share ›



havi → femmemuse · 2 months ago

Unpopular opinion: Essentia is basically just water with a pinch of baking soda

2 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



fortinbras · 2 months ago

Shotgunning water doesn't hydrate you at all. It'll just run right through you because the sudden increase in blood volume makes the kidneys excrete the water in the blood before it can be absorbed by your body cells. I'm skeptical about all these fancy fortified waters. If you want antioxidants just eat fresh fruit and vegetables, you'll get plenty of those+other useful vitamins and minerals.

3 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



Katrina Elizabeth · 2 months ago

Currently addicted to sparkling SmartWater.

1 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



rhat → Katrina Elizabeth · 2 months ago

What is it about sparkling smart water that makes it so good???? I don't even like sparkling water, but I accidentally got a sparkling smart water at LAX one time and I have been craving it ever since!!

^ | v · Reply · Share ›

Source: am a sparkling water aficionado.

3 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



Katrina Elizabeth → rhat · 2 months ago

Holy shit, that's exactly what happened to me! My boyfriend has stocked the fridge with club soda 100x and I've never cared. I tried La Croix but meh. That sparkling SmartWater, though... has my recycling bin overflowing. I don't even recognize myself.

1 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



Sara S. · 2 months ago

I got the "rose gold" (more of a rich bronze, really) S'well bottle for my birthday in May, and now all water feels like fancy water. I mean, nothing fancy in it or about it, but the receptacle makes *me* feel fancy.

10 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



Kelly → Sara S. · 2 months ago

I like this solution better!!

1 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



thestarsxalign → Sara S. · 2 months ago

My birthday is next week, and I'm totally doing this.

1 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



laurennejanelle · 2 months ago

but do I need la croix (yes, definitely, except for the coconut one)

7 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



glitterstim → laurennejanelle · 2 months ago

The coconut one tastes like the way Coppertone smells.

2 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



autillicautnullibi → laurennejanelle · 2 months ago

no one needs coconut la croix except for masochists.

^ | v · Reply · Share ›



theprettiestkatie → laurennejanelle · 2 months ago

Controversial opinion: coconut is the best La Croix

9 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



L2L → theprettiestkatie · 2 months ago

It truly is.

1 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



Caitlin Díaz → theprettiestkatie · 2 months ago

I second this!!!

1 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



hextelephone → theprettiestkatie · 2 months ago

I'm drinking one riiiiight now.

1 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



bunnygrrr13000 → theprettiestkatie · 2 months ago

logged in just to agree and upvote

1 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



Hayley → theprettiestkatie · 2 months ago

Agreed.

^ | v · Reply · Share ›



paraphernalia → theprettiestkatie · 2 months ago

I can stomach it in cocktails.

^ | v · Reply · Share ›



LJIS → laurennejanelle · 2 months ago

I had the apricot one recently and it was fabulous. Coconut I refuse to even try!

1 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



theprettiestkatie → LJIS · 2 months ago



thexstarsxalign → laurennjanelle • 2 months ago

I tried all the fancy La Croix's (except coconut) and liked them, but then one day I drank un-fancy lime, and I haven't looked back since. Light and refreshing and mixes well with gin, what more could you want?

1 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



zldn • 2 months ago

Voss is my mixer for gin/vodka for when I'm getting fancy and staying in

^ | v • Reply • Share ›



havi → zldn • 2 months ago

i really hope you're talking about the flavored kind...

^ | v • Reply • Share ›



zldn → havi • 2 months ago

Definitely! Otherwise why bother?

^ | v • Reply • Share ›



Kim • 2 months ago

Can we not promote needless waste? The planet is covered in plastic water bottles.

3 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



aguirre81 • 2 months ago

the nikken filters give water a great taste!

1 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



ModernGrace • 2 months ago

It doesn't matter to me as long as it's ice cold and filtered.

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AvatarKaitlin Watkins Bailey — all I can think of is Titus Andromedon calling them "pocket buttoholes"

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