

Hydrogen water: the truth about this new trend



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You may have seen celebs like Blake Lively, Ryan Reynolds, and Zac Efron drinking hydrogen water. Why is this the drink the latest craze in the trend of specialty waters? “Hydrogen water is just one of the newest fads, and there is much marketing hype around it,” Sonya Angelone, MS, RDN, CLT, a spokeswoman for the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, told Fox News.

Does the hype have strong scientific basis? Can hydrogen water really help your health? We’ll talk about that in a second, but first, the basics:

What is hydrogen water?

For starters, let’s compare regular water and hydrogen water. Regular H₂O has a really low concentration of hydrogen that’s proportional to the amount of hydrogen in the earth’s atmosphere. And hydrogen water is water with added molecular hydrogen, which is an odorless, tasteless gas. “Some of the hydrogen waters use the term ‘diatomic hydrogen,’ which is the same as molecular hydrogen,” Stephen S. Fong, PhD, associate

professor of chemical and life science engineering at Virginia Commonwealth University, told Fox News.

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If you really want to get technical, regular H₂O has a molecular hydrogen concentration of about 0.0000004 millimoles per liter. “The highest possible concentration of molecular hydrogen in water at room temperature would be about 0.8 millimoles per liter if water was placed in an environment that contained pure molecular hydrogen,” Fong explained.

And what about the cost? Hydrogen water isn't cheap: It's about \$3 per 11-ounce container, about \$1 per tablet that can hydrogenize a 16-ounce glass of water, and about \$500 and up for a DIY machine.

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Is hydrogen water good for you?

As for health benefits, proponents of hydrogen water say it has antioxidant activity, boosts energy, helps you recover from a workout, lowers inflammation, and slows the aging process. Fong told Fox News that most of the studies supporting these potential benefits were conducted in laboratory settings, making it difficult to validate the health claims. In plain speak? More research is needed to determine if drinking hydrogen water can provide a health boost. "There really isn't enough scientific evidence to support the claims that hydrogen water has any benefits over plain tap water," Angelone said.

What's the bottom line?

If you do want to try out the trend, shop around for a water packaged in an aluminum pouch that will hold in the hydrogen, Tyler W. LeBaron, executive director of the Molecular Hydrogen Foundation, told Fox News. But drink fast: Once a non-permeable container is opened and exposed to air, “the amount of molecular hydrogen in the hydrogen water will

immediately start to decrease until it returns to the concentration of regular water,” said Fong, who explained that the hydrogen will diminish by half about every two hours or so. And if you buy the water in a container that isn’t made to hold the hydrogen in, “by the time the consumer gets the product, the concentration will be back to the concentration of normal water,” Fong said.

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While the health merits of hydrogen water require further investigation, one thing is for sure: Getting your nutritional benefits from foods like fruits, veggies, and whole grains is much more cost effective. “The best way to increase minerals in the body is to eat foods rich in these minerals that also provide many other nutritional benefits,” Angelone said.

Editor's note: Amy Gorin is a nutrition advisor for the Global Organization for EPA and DHA Omega-3s (GOED).

Amy Gorin is freelance writer and owner of [Amy Gorin Nutrition](#) in Jersey City, NJ. Connect with her on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#), and [Pinterest](#).