

Is Alkaline Water Better for Hydration? | Dr. Andrew Huberman

If you go into the store or even a convenient store you will see pH water. Now every water has a pH. Right? Lower numbers mean more acidic, higher numbers mean more alkaline or more basic. You'll see pH water that is 7.4, you'll see 7.8, you'll see 9.8, you'll see a huge range of these things. And there are many, many different claims about how the pH of water is important for regulating the pH of the body. Here's the real story: the pH of your body, that is, the pH of the cells at different locations in your body, is strongly, strongly homeostatically regulated. What do I mean by that? It means it doesn't change that much, which means that you have very specific biological mechanisms that ensure the pH is maintained. For instance, in the skin cells of your skin, in the retinal cells of your eye, in your brain cells. Now it is true that across the body, different cells and tissues have fairly widely varying pH. You know, it has been said that the pH of bodily tissues is generally between 7.2 and 7.4. However, if you were to look at the pH of your gut and keep in mind that your gut is not just your stomach, your gut is the entire pathway ranging from your throat all the way down to where you excrete things out of your body. That entire pathway has different pH levels depending on where you are along the gut and intestinal pathway. And in fact, having much lower, that is, more acidic pH at certain locations along your gut pathway is what allows those gut microbiota, those little microorganisms of which you have trillions that are important for regulating everything from neurotransmitter production to hormone production that allow them to flourish and do well. That said, except under conditions of hemorrhage or changes in blood volume that are of a dangerous level that can lead to seizure or even death, the pH of the rest of the cells of your body, and also those gut cells, doesn't change that much on a moment-to-moment basis. So if somebody tells you that you should drink alkaline water or alkalinized water, as it's sometimes called, in order to keep your body more alkaline and less acidic, there is essentially no basis for that at a macroscopic level or even at a local level. Now what that does not mean is that the pH of the water that you drink is not important. In fact, if the pH of the water that you drink is too low, that is, if the water that you consume is too acidic, it will not move as quickly from your gut into the other regions of your body. And therefore, the other cells of your body that require that water will not be able to access it as readily. You've probably experienced this if

you've consumed certain water and it feels like it's sloshing around in your stomach or it feels like it's um just somehow staying there or you feel its presence more not just as volume but it's almost as if you can feel the little waves of water along the inside of your gut Now sometimes that can relate to temperature but oftentimes that can relate to the ph of that water And it turns out it is true that water that is more alkaline that is ph is of 7.4 or higher can move more readily across the aquaporin channel And in terms of absorption of water from the endothelial lining and the other cell type lining of your gut into the rest of your body It is true that higher ph water provided that Ph isn't too high is going to be absorbed more quickly which partially explains why some people have an affinity for this higher ph water Now this is not to say that you need to consume high ph water in order to hydrate your body properly I wanna be very clear about that However if you are interested in what the value of elevated ph water is It largely has to do with this accelerated absorption There is also growing evidence that it can adjust the function of certain cells that are within your immune system and thereby reduce certain inflammatory responses So I realize as I'm saying this some people out there are probably think oh no this guy is like a ph water proponent He's saying we have to drink alkaline water or buy very fancy water Now I want to be clear That is not what I'm saying And I'm also not saying that you need to purchase very expensive water in order to derive the maximum benefits from the water that you drink It turns out there are a few things that you can do by way of temperature and by way of filtering water and a few other tricks that I'll tell you a little bit later that will allow you to increase the absorption rate of water in the gut which turns out to be a very interesting but also potentially important thing to do for not just reducing inflammation but also making sure that you're getting proper hydration of different cell types in your body including rapid hydration of your brain cells which can greatly enhance cognitive function