Is drinking cold water harmful? [1]

Dear Alice,

The good drinking a lot of water does to your body is, of course, clear now to everyone. I drink about 2 liters of water daily, but not cold water. I hear drinking cold water will burn more calories as the body has to warm itself to room temperature when intaking the water into the system. Is that right?

Doesn't drinking 2 liters of cold water harm the stomach, kidneys, or any other parts?

Your always thirsty reader

Answer

Dear always thirsty reader,

Our bodies do not expend calories when absorbing cold water. In order for water to hydrate the body, it need not be at room temperature, or even at the same temperature as our bodies'. As a matter of fact, the American College of Sports Medicine's Position Stand on Exercise and Fluid Replacement states that fluid needs to be cooler than ambient temperature, meaning between 59 – 72°F. Colder fluids leave the stomach more quickly than warmer ones, allowing faster rehydration. During hot weather, when we tend to lose extra fluids, beverages in this temperature range will have a cooling effect on the body. Drinking cool beverages can help to cool us from the inside.

Also, there's no need to worry: cold foods and beverages do not harm any of our internal organs, so we can feel free to enjoy them.

By the way, sweating is another way to help bring down our body temperature. During exercise, our core body temperature rises as the intensity of our workout increases. This rise in temperature initiates a process that causes us to sweat. The heat that's generated is carried through our blood to just under the skin, where sweat glands are activated, releasing fluid (a.k.a. sweat). It's the evaporation of sweat that's cooling.

Alice!

Category:
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