

What is Purified Water?

The majority of the human body is comprised of water and human beings can live only a very short time without water.

Water is a chemical substance that is essential to all known forms of life. It covers 71% of Earth's surface. It is found in the oceans (saltwater) and polar ice caps, but it is also present as clouds, rain water, rivers, freshwater aquifers, lakes, airborne vapour and sea ice.

Water in these bodies perpetually moves through a cycle of evaporation, precipitation, and runoff to the sea. Clean water is essential to human life. In many parts of the world, it is in short supply.

Of all the water in the world, only about 3% is drinkable by human beings. Of this small percentage, the majority is either wholly or partially polluted by natural or man made contaminants. The body requires H₂O to survive but not the contaminants found in most drinking water.

What Are Your Choices For Drinking Water?

Most people in South Africa face limited choices of drinking water. They can either drink tap water provided by the municipalities they live in or bore hole water on their own land. Neither of these choices provides pure drinking water.

What Are the Different Types of Drinking Water?

Generally speaking there are three choices for drinking water available to the consumer:

- * Tap Water (provided by local municipal water suppliers)
- * Bore Hole (found in more rural areas of the country)
- * Bottled Water (sold commercially throughout the country)

Tap Water:

Tap water comes from local rivers and streams and very often plants that recycle raw sewerage and other waste water. Because many rivers, streams and other groundwater sources are polluted by natural runoff and man made contaminants, and all waste water and raw sewerage contain high levels of bacteria, increasing levels of chlorine are required to kill bacterial and other harmful organisms.

Tap water is regulated by The Department of Water Affairs. Regulations in no way require the elimination of contaminants. The Department only sets minimum levels of contaminants (including chlorine) and the long term effects of these poisons on the human body are largely unknown. In addition chlorine adds unpleasant odours and taste to tap water.

Bore Hole Water:

Bore Hole water is subject to the same types of natural and man made pollution as tap water but it is unregulated. Some countries strongly recommends chlorination and dechlorination of owner's individual bore holes but mandatory compliance is not required. Bore hole water is particularly subject to ground bacteria pollution through the bore hole head itself. The use of chlorine adds unpleasant odours and taste to the bore hole supplied drinking water.

Bottled Water:

Re-packaged bottled water:

There are many types of bottled drinking water on the market today with the result that some are good, some are bad and some are useless when it comes to providing pure drinking water.

Some unethical suppliers merely take tap water and bottle the water in small packages. These bottlers are able to charge a premium for tap water but the levels of contaminants are the same as in tap water.

Spring water:

The source of some bottled water is spring water and this term implies a fresh mountain spring of wholesome drinking water. Springs however, are subject to the same types and levels of natural and man made contaminants as tap and bore hole water and the consumer does not get the benefit of pure water.

Purified water:

Purified water is the only water that that one should drink for their health and the health of their family. There are two processes used in order to purify water: distillation and [reverse osmosis](#) .

Distillation is a process whereby water is turned to steam and condensed leaving behind all contaminants and bacteria. Many countries without natural source water use distillation to provide pure drinking water.

Reverse osmosis is a process where by water is filtered through a very small filter and contaminants are removed but trace elements are left in the water.

Many experts believe that distillation is the best way to create pure water.

Conclusion:

If you are an individual interested in maintaining a healthy lifestyle or a parent that is concerned about the health of your family, you should consider adding purified water to your diet.

No other water source provides the purity your body needs.

Why People Drink Bottled Water

One third of the people who drink bottled water do so because of concerns about the safety of tap water. Another third drink it as a substitute for other beverages - like coke, juices, lemonade, etc. The remainder, drink it for convenience, taste, peer pressure, prestige, or a combination of other reasons.

Much of the increase in the number of people drinking bottled water is due to aggressive marketing by the bottled water industry which promotes the perception that bottled water is safer and more pure than tap water.

It is true that most bottled water contains no detectable level of contaminants. But we've also seen scams in the past where some bottled waters have been filled with tap water. So we can't just assume that because water is bottled that it is safer than tap water.

Therefore, the quality of the bottled water that you have access to, largely depends on where you live.

The most common contaminants tested for are:

Coliform bacteria - while not dangerous by themselves, their presence often indicates the presence of other more serious bacteria.

Synthetic chemicals - with more and more companies dumping their waste into public waters, synthetic chemicals are showing up in water tests. Many of these synthetic chemicals are so new that no one knows what long-term effects they may have on the human body.

Fluoride - especially important for women concerned about bone loss. Excessive fluoride levels can cause adverse effects on bones.

Arsenic contamination - this is a well known human carcinogen. If the water is from communities near mining companies or other industrial companies, the groundwater may be contaminated with arsenic.

Chloroform - another human carcinogen. Also thought to poison the liver and have adverse effects on the heart.

Nitrates - the controversy still rages over whether this is or is not a carcinogen. Many health nutritionists believe that it is a cancer trigger.

Water is, next to oxygen, the most important and essential element necessary to life. But regardless of what the bottled water ads may lead you to believe, this does not mean that all bottled water is better or even as good as the tap water from your faucet.