

Savvy Switch

Why Tap Water is a Better Choice

Did you know that Americans now drink more bottled water than milk or juice? We buy 30 billion bottles a year, 80 percent of which ends up in landfills for hundreds of years. That's why Earth-friendly folks use refillable bottles these days.



In addition to being eco-savvy, consumers have plenty of reasons to avoid bottled water. According to a four-year study by the National Resources Defense Council (NRDC), we cannot assume that the bottled water we purchase is necessarily any better regulated, purer or safer than most tap water. Here are some revealing facts:

- People typically spend from 240 to 10,000 times more per gallon for bottled water than for tap water.
- According to government and industry estimates, at least 25 percent of bottled water (some say 40 percent) is tap water, sometimes with additional treatment, sometimes not.
- Independent laboratory analysis in the NRDC study showed that about one-third of the bottled waters tested contained significant contamination in at least one test. That means the levels of chemical or bacterial contaminants exceeded those allowed under a state or industry standard or guideline.
- The Food and Drug Administration doesn't regulate water bottled and sold in-state, effectively exempting 60 to 70 percent of U.S. bottled water from FDA standards. Even when its rules apply, they are weaker in many ways than Environmental Protection Agency rules governing big-city tap water. The majority of the country's tap water passes the EPA standards.
- Tap water test results and notices of violations must be reported to state or federal officials. There is no mandatory reporting for water bottlers; manufacturers have recalled bottled water 100 times, without letting consumers know about it two out of three times.
- City water systems must issue annual "right-to-know" reports, telling consumers what is in their water; bottlers successfully killed such a requirement for bottled water.

Every American has a right to safe, good-tasting water from the tap. If we choose to buy bottled water, we deserve the same assurances that it too, is safe. Whether our water comes from a tap or a bottle, we have a right to know what's in it. If bottled water is so pure, why not prove it, with full disclosure on the label?

Primary Source: National Resources Defense Council (nrdc.org)

Medical Qigong versus Qigong: What's the difference?

Qigong represents the concepts of qi and gong. Qi (pronounced "chee") means air, breath of life, or vital energy that flows through the body and all things in the universe. Gong (pronounced "gung") means cultivating and self-discipline. Combined, qigong means cultivating vital energy. To cultivate vital energy, one can practice qigong exercises, or see a medical qigong practitioner to help enhance the flow of qi in the individual's body.

Qigong exercises are self-treatment practices in movement, breathing, and meditation. These exercises are practiced to achieve a specific purpose including balancing our qi to prevent disease, and enhance our health. Qigong exercises are recommended by a medical qigong practitioner and are an integral part of qigong therapy.

Medical qigong involves a medical qigong practitioner who regulates an individual's qi. More specifically, the medical qigong practitioner balances the qi in the body, enriches any areas that are deficient, and releases any areas that are blocked or excessive.

The general benefits of Medical Qigong can include: improved physical strength and energy; relief of pain, illness, and physical problems; strengthened immune system; maintenance and improvement of the state of physical fitness and mental wellbeing; a feeling of calm, comfort, balance, and rejuvenation; and it can aid in increasing longevity and overall good health.

Some of the conditions that Medical Qigong can address are: digestive disorders; gallstones; headaches; heart conditions including palpitations, and hypertension; kidney diseases including kidney stones; liver conditions; pancreatitis and abdominal pain; and urogenital disorders.

One can survive for a certain period of time without food or water, yet one cannot survive without life force energy. Therefore, doing qigong exercises and seeing a medical qigong practitioner can support this energy that is necessary for our survival and destiny of who we are as individuals.

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