

TIMES LIFE

A pinch o' salt!

Conflicting research on beauty and fitness often makes the mind boggle. How much of it should we take seriously, wonders Kalpana Sharma as she goes myth busting



PHOTOS: GETTY IMAGES

FOR years now, the eight glasses of water a day mantra has been touted as a powerful health fact! If you've blindly followed that rule, you just may have been on the wrong track. Contradictory findings state that there's no scientific evidence to prove decisively that drinking eight glasses of water is good for your system. Even, drinking tea isn't all that therapeutic.

Myth busting is becoming the favourite pastime of researchers. But in the process, how do we, the consumers and ardent fans of all 'proven research' distinguish between what's valid and what's not? Some health myths are further reinforced thanks to Bollywood stars who consistently maintain that drinking 'lots' of water, for instance, plays a pivotal role in their beauty regimen. Actor Neha Dhupia swears by the benefits of water saying, "I guzzle at least three litres per day to get rid of toxins."

So what about the theory that one should follow body signals or thirst when it comes to water consumption? On the contrary, excess water induces water intoxication in people leading a sedentary lifestyle. Fit-

ness guru Leena Mogre says, "If you're into heavy workouts, drink ample water to replenish lost fluids."

Rahul Murada, consultant psychiatrist at Sitararam Bhartia and North Point Hospital, Delhi, also breaks the myth of tea being beneficial in curing cancer and heart strokes. He states, "Green tea helps fight cancer. Not our regular Indian black tea boiled with ample amounts of sugar and milk." Honey Shah, a dietician at Max Healthcare, Delhi explains, "New researches keep cropping up, one day claiming something and the other day refuting it. It's best not to consult a specialist. Don't blindly follow research."



"GREEN TEA HELPS FIGHT CANCER. NOT REGULAR DESI TEA WITH MILK AND SUGAR"

Breaking another popular Indian health myth that acne is caused due to impure blood or constipation, Dr Alok Agarwal, a senior consultant at Indraprastha Apollo Hospital, Delhi clears the air. "Acne's caused by excessive secretion of sebaceous glands, hormonal imbalances and stress."

There's also good news for all bookworms. The conventional belief that reading in poor light ruins one's eyesight, is nothing but an old wives' tale. "Reading in dim light merely strains the eyes temporarily causing headaches and not damaging or making it prone to eye infections," he adds.

Our favourite indulgence chocolate is often blamed for poor teeth. But, chocoholics can now rejoice as he adds, "Chocolate has no reason to make your teeth bad. In fact, a sticky cheesy pizza is likely to damage your teeth more than a harmless bar of chocolate. Anything that sticks to your teeth needs to be cleaned as it causes tooth decay." So, bust the health fads and hit the treadmill instead as the latest medical research states that it's not necessary to sweat profusely while working out. Sweating has nothing to do with weight loss. Fitness guru Rahul Dev says, "You sweat as your body gets heated due to workouts. Sweating or perspiration cools the body down. The level of perspiration varies according to one's age, sex and the environment one is working out."

So, the next time you want to dig into some sinfully irresistible chocolate or read that book under the covers before you shut your eyes — go easy on the guilt trip!

(With inputs by Raja Rymbal Sharma)

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