The Wolfe Clinic News

BOTTLED WATER

Wasted money, wasted health

It is no secret that bottled water is a cash cow for big business and industry. Incredibly, it often sells for three times the price of gasoline, and more and more of us are guzzling it at an increasing rate. Already worth over $500 billion, the bottled water industry is 30 percent larger than the pharmaceutical industry and is one of the fastest growing and least regulated industries in the world.

Marketing and fear are the two main reasons bottled water sells so well. As our anxiety grows over the health of our families and the state of the environment, unscrupulous private companies are quick to exploit those worries with expensive solutions of dubious merit. Why else would someone pay up to 10,000 times more for something that in most cases they can get for a fraction of a penny by simply turning on a tap? People complain all day long about the price of gas but rarely complain about getting scammed by the bottled water outfits. Go figure.

At the Wolfe Clinic our main concerns are the positive or negative health consequences of the water we consume. Water is the most important compound you put into your body. Therefore, it follows that health-wise, water will either be the best or the nastiest thing that you consume. But before we discuss affordable, healthier choices we should first have a better understanding of the many problems associated with bottled water.

The Economics of Bottled Water

Big Water is mighty big and bottling water is a very lucrative business. A December 2006 report published by Sustain, a sustainable food and farming group, claims that bottled water consumption worldwide has increased 250 percent (from 58 billion litres in 1994 to 144 billion in 2002), largely as a result of successful marketing. The report says that bottled water is marketed as a fashion accessory for health-conscious consumers with discerning palates. Laurie

Ries, a marketing consultant quoted in the Polaris Institute's 2005 "Inside the Bottle" report, describes bottled water as "America's most affordable status symbol."

We really have to scratch our heads in wonder. How in the heck did they ever get the public to accept paying up to $3.00 for a bottle of tap water? I personally

Inside This Issue

The Wolfe Clinic
"FEAR IS THE GREATEST DISEASE"

find that offensive! There are no ingredients in it. There is no product development involved. There is no research involved. (The filtration systems they use are old technology)

So, what accounts for this phenomenal success? The convenience of easily portable bottled water is one reason. Also, Americans consider bottled water healthier than the alternatives. In a recent Harris survey, more than twice as many Americans associated a healthy lifestyle with bottled water rather than milk. Obesity concerns have dulled demand for sweetened soft drinks and juices, while advertisers have played up the connection between fitness and drinking water. The message: It's healthy to sweat, and to drink bottled water. And, of course, they play on our fears; fear of disease and contamination. Unfortunately, no one is taking time to educate the consumer about the different types of water on the market and their real effects on your vital health.

While initially the bottled water industry was selling mainly spring water, today the major vendors such as Coke and Pepsi are "purifying" and bottling good old tap water. The success and compelling economics of selling municipal water convinced other participants to follow suit, reducing the amount of actual spring water on the market.

Paradoxically, both Dasani (Coke's water label) and Aquafina (Pepsi Co's) are simply reprocessed tap water. Consumers are paying inflated prices for something they have already paid for through their own municipal taxes; ordinary tap water. It has simply been filtered, mineralized (in Coke's case), de-mineralized, bottled and neatly packaged for sale. Bottled water corporations falsely imply that these 'proprietary' treatment processes are elaborate thereby justifying the higher cost of their products (bottled water is up to 10,000 times more expensive than tap water). Yet, the industry's treatment processes do not guarantee that bottled water is safer than tap water; in fact, a number of studies have demonstrated that bottled water is often less safe.

Think about it for a second. There is something seriously wrong here. The majority of the bottle water we drink (Dasani, Aquafina, and a few others) are all made from water taken from the public-water system. In many bottling plants the municipality only gets money for a permit to take water, not by volume. So essentially, the public-water system which we tax-payers pay for, funds these big companies making bottled water, which we in turn buy at a super inflated price. The real kicker is that they are paying only a fraction of the price we pay for the same water. Talk about selling snowballs to Eskimos.

Another marketing tactic of the bottled water industry has been the promotion of their product as convenient. Whether it is fashionable messages carrying their brand, such as clever and colorful designs to hook on to knapsacks or the marketing of a product fit for a fast paced world of trendsetters, bottled water goes wherever you go. Bottled water is also available for sale wherever you go. Our schools are no exception to this marketing strategy. Coke and Pepsi have been eagerly acquiring exclusive beverage agreements for our schools and campuses. Sometimes known as pouring or exclusivity contracts, these contracts give beverage companies exclusive rights to sell their products on school or district grounds. This isn't convenience, it's corporate greed.

Picture yourself paying $1.50 - $3.00 for this refreshing and pristine water packaged in a convenient plastic bottle. This is the image that the bottled water industry is conveying in expensive advertising campaigns and we're buying it. Today close to one-fifth of the population in North America relies exclusively on bottled water for their daily hydration. Bottled water is now outpacing the consumption of coffee, tea, apple juice and milk.

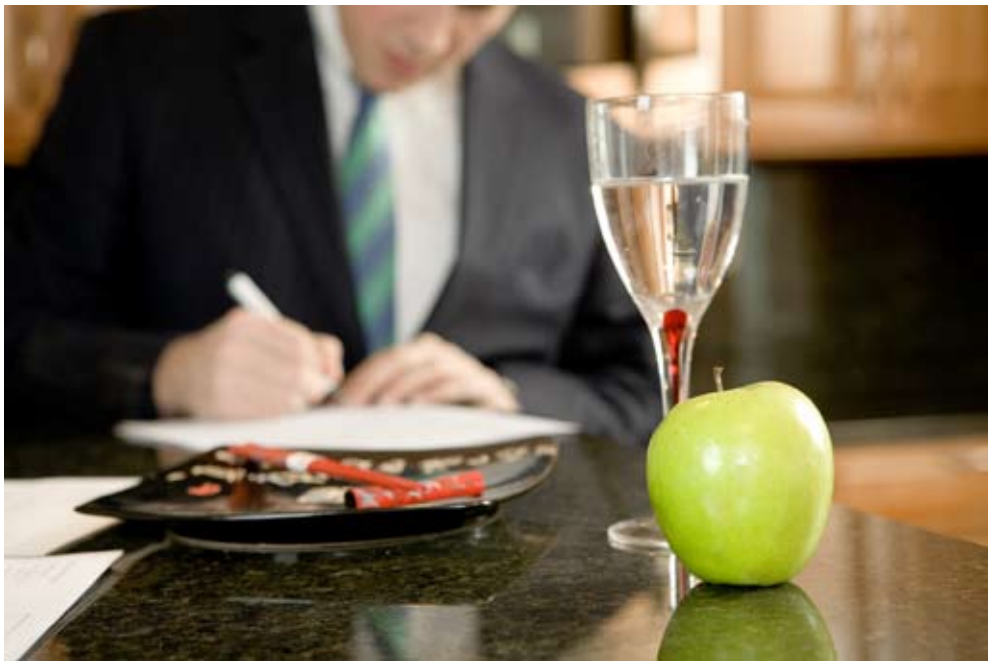
These large corporate players have certainly met the marketing challenge. Unlike other industries that transform valuable resources like timber, minerals, oil, and gas into new products, bottled water is simply water transformed into water. Consider what Jeff Caso, a Nestle executive had to say about their bottled water products; "We sell water, so we have to be clever."

It's understandable why bottled water is such a popular fad; it's slick advertising and the public's gullibility . They have taken water from a cheap natural resource and turned it into a pricey consumer item. But is it truly healthy, safe and convenient? These are the questions that need asking. What is really 'inside the bottle'?

Safety of Bottled Water

The Natural Resource Defense Council (NRDC) estimates that American bottled water plants undergo inspection once every five or six years, while the Canadian Food Inspection Agency estimates that Canadian plants are inspected once every three years. This lags significantly behind the norm for tap water testing in North America, where tests are run several times daily. For example, the City of Toronto tests its water quality every 4 hours!

- FDA regulations don't apply to bottled water produced and sold within the same state, which accounts for 60 to 70 percent of bottled water in the US.
- The FDA allows for some levels of fecal coliform (a sign of likely contamination with fecal matter) and E.coli within bottled water while the EPA demands that tap water is free of these contaminates.
- The FDA doesn't oblige companies to test their bottled water for parasites such as cryptosporidium or giardia while the EPA does.
- In 1999, the US Natural Resource Defense Council released a four-year study on 103 popular brands of bottled water and found that one-fourth were nothing more than bottled tap water, while one-third were contaminated with levels of toxins above state or industry standards.
- The NRDC report concluded that bottled water is no better than tap water, and could even be worse, as tap water undergoes more rigorous testing, disinfecting and



filtering processes and is required to conform to stricter EPA standards than its bottled counterpart.

- In 2004, the American Society of Microbiology tested 68 commercial mineral bottled waters sold throughout the world, and found that 40 percent contained bacteria or fungi, while 21 samples could support bacteria growth in lab cultures.
- Tap water contamination issues are required to be made public immediately, while there is no such requirement for bottled water.

- Even though business is flourishing and millions of people drink bottled water, the industry remains very loosely regulated. The US Food and Drug Administration has assigned one half of a staff person (full-time equivalent) to bottled water regulation and less than one to ensuring bottled water compliance.

"So pure we promise nothing." This is the slogan from Pepsi's 2003 marketing campaign for their Aquafina bottled water. Oddly enough, this phrase speaks the truth about the relative purity of bottled water.

Another health issue with bottled water is the treatment process that produces bromate, which is considered to be a carcinogen. As well, several peer-reviewed scientific studies have found disturbing concentrations of toxic ingredients such as arsenic and mercury in their bottled water samplings.

When Coke launched Dasani in the UK, March 2004, it had to withdraw nearly half a million bottles due to bromate contamination. First, Coca-Cola's new brand of "pure" bottled water, Dasani, was revealed to be tap water taken from the mains. Then it emerged that what the firm described as its "highly sophisticated purification process", based on Nasa spacecraft technology, was in fact reverse osmosis commonly used in many standard domestic water purification units. Then the entire UK supply of Dasani was pulled off the shelves because it has been contaminated with bromate, a cancer-causing chemical.

In other words they took Thames Water from the tap; put it through a purification process, called it "pure" and give it a 10,000 percent mark-up and in the process, added a batch of calcium chloride, containing bromide, for "taste profile"; then pumped chemicals through it, oxidising the bromide, which is not a problem, into bromate, which is a problem. Bromide when oxidised into bromate becomes a pretty nasty carcinogen.

Distilled and Reverse Osmosis Water

The two most common types of bottled water are distilled water and reverse osmosis water. Both types are generally very pure although both can allow the carry over of trace contaminants if boiling points are similar or if molecular size is similar. Unfortunately, many advocates are unaware that ultra pure water is not the best for regular long-term consumption and that it can carry an unexpected long-term health risk.

Distilled water is boiled and evaporated. It has no minerals in it and the very structure of the cell of each water molecule is also stripped away; depending upon how it is treated, it may contain chemicals like nickel and aluminum. In my opinion it is not fit for human consumption.

To understand the reason why the purest is not always the best, one has to look at the basic chemistry of water itself. Water has what some chemists call a "stability index". This index indicates how stable water is in relation to the chemicals and minerals in its immediate environment. Water naturally seeks to achieve a zero or neutral index. If water has a positive index at a given temperature, it will tend to release or precipitate minerals that are dissolved in it. One can witness the results of water having a strongly positive stability index (for example hard water) when such water deposits scale in pipes or hot water heaters.

Water that is on the negative side of the index is aggressive and prone to dissolving minerals and metals from its immediate environment. One can see evidence of such water when it corrodes pipes or produces rust. The more negative the index, the more aggressive the water is. Water produced from distillation and reverse osmosis has an extremely negative stability index. This water also actively absorbs carbon dioxide from the air and makes the water more acidic. When one drinks small quantities of this water for short periods of time, it has the special property of being able to absorb toxic substances in the body and remove them. This detoxification can be good for the body and can aid it in recovering from long-term exposure to certain contaminants. However, regular and long-term consumption of ultra-pure, demineralized water will also strip the body of magnesium, calcium and trace minerals. The more the mineral loss, the greater the risk of osteoporosis, osteo-arthritis, hypothyroidism, coronary artery disease, high blood pressure and a long list of degenerative diseases generally associated with premature aging.

The longer a person drinks demineralized water, the more likely the development of mineral deficiencies and an acid state in the body. A number of physicians, nutritionists and researchers now believe that aging and disease are the direct result of these deficiencies and lead to the development of an acid state in the body.

Dr. Zoltan P. Rona, a Canadian physician and clinical nutritionist, reports that exclusive consumption of de-mineralized water will, over time, lead to multiple mineral deficiencies. His research with over 3000 patients indicates that those who supplemented their purified water intake with trace minerals were not as deficient but still not as adequately nourished in minerals as their non-purified water drinking counterparts even after several years of mineral supplementation.

Put simply, distilled water and reverse osmosis water acts like a vacuum and will suck out many of the beneficial trace minerals you need to stay healthy.

Obtaining good mineral balance is hard enough; one clearly does not want to put a metabolic drain in their system by drinking distilled water. Fasting while using distilled water can be particularly dangerous because of the rapid loss of electrolytes (sodium, potassium, chloride) and trace minerals like magnesium, deficiencies of which can cause heart beat irregularities and high blood pressure. Cooking foods in distilled water pulls the minerals out of them and lowers their nutrient value.

Another negative point involves alkalinity and acidity. Natural health writers generally agree that the body maintains best health when it maintains a ph leaning to the alkaline side rather than the acidic side, and yet distilled water quickly turns highly acidic, about 5.8 in an open air container.

Environmental Concerns

Although the Big Water Corporations would like us to associate their products with pristine lakes, rivers and snow-capped mountains, bottled water inflicts substantial (and largely unnecessary) damage on the environment. Plastic bottles of water are transported to various parts of the world by fossil fuel-burning vehicles and the bottles themselves are made of plastic derived from crude oil. The Earth Policy Institute estimates that in the US alone, 2 million barrels of crude are used annually for this purpose. "Energetically speaking, the life cycle of bottled water is just ridiculous," says Dr. Keith Solomon, a toxicologist at the University of Guelph in Ontario.

This isn't the only cost of this 'convenience'. Highly dangerous toxic chemicals and contaminants are released into our air and water during the manufacturing, burying and burning of these bottles. These same plastic packages are quickly becoming the fastest-growing form of municipal solid waste in the U.S. and Canada!

As well, the filtration method used by the large corporations is not

water-efficient, according to the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC). A lot of the water that passes through, unless it's collected for other uses, goes down the drain.

In some cases, where water is already free of dissolved solids, two litres of water may be needed to produce one litre of finished water, the CHMC says. In other cases, four or five litres of water may be used to produce one litre of filtered water. This is a huge drain on local water resources at a time when conservation is supposed to be a concern. What a waste!

The problems with bottled water are compounded in developing countries, where the public infrastructure for water purification and distribution is often inadequate or even non-existent. International financial institutions, first-world governments, and the transnational corporations that stand to profit from lack of access to potable water have teamed up to pressure poor countries to slash public waterworks funding or even sell the infrastructure to a for-profit corporation.

Many communities within the US and Canada are increasingly wary of allowing bottled water companies to deplete local water supplies to fuel their growing industry. Citizens of Maine, Florida, Wisconsin, New Hampshire and Ontario have all protested local and international bottled water companies that have wanted to set up shop in their towns and drain local water reserves for wider distribution. The Corporate Accountability International Organization

reports that Coca-Cola, vendor of numerous bottled waters, has depleted water supplies in some areas of India, leaving affected communities struggling for survival.

Many people are beginning to connect the dots between the trend of bottled water in relation to water privatization. We need to consider the costs of tacitly agreeing to pay for water sold for profit. Consumer willingness to pay more for a gallon of bottled water than they pay for a gallon of gas helps to set the stage for public acceptance of the privatization of water services. Water corporations stand to benefit from this trend. In 2003 all the major water service corporations confirmed that they have set their sights on the public water services in Canada and the U.S. and the corporate objective is to move the utilities operations, and/or delivery of water and waste water services from public to private hands. This is a dramatic change since most are currently publicly owned. Water is being transformed from a human right to a commodity and service that has a price tag for those who can afford it.

Each time a bottle of water is purchased, transnational corporations, whose thirst for profit outweighs concern for public welfare, grow stronger. The unprecedented demand for their products increases demand for public water, which they purchase at a substantially lower price than households are asked to pay. Experts speculate that if the trend for bottled water consumption continues, it could lead to the privatization of municipal water supplies.

As well, consuming huge amounts of bottled water leads to millions of pounds of plastic waste each year and is yet another reason that crude oil consumption (used in making most plastic bottles) continues to grow.

Water bottles everywhere! Single-serving ones from the gas station or the drugstore or bought in bulk at big box stores. Brightly coloured ones, made of hard plastic and designed for reuse. And now lightweight aluminum ones with ceramic liners.

Single-serving bottles are in demand for recycling. They get reused for making fibre, for example, in the polyester insulation of outdoor jackets. But the truth is not everyone recycles them. The majority of single-serving bottles don't end up in recycling facilities. They end up as trash or at the side of the road.

Bottled water can come from any source.

Here's a quick reference guide:

- Mineral and spring water. This must come from an underground source (not a public water supply) and can't be altered with chemicals. Mineral water has a higher amount of dissolved mineral salts.
- Bottled water. This can be water from any source, distilled, carbonated or treated in any manner. Dasani (owned by Coca-Cola) is filtered municipal tap water. (Pepsi owns Aquafina, which is also sourced from municipalities.)
- Artesian water/Artesian well water. Bottled water from a well that taps a confined aquifer (a water-bearing underground layer of rock or sand).

- Sparkling water. Water that has been carbonated. Soda water, seltzer water and tonic water are not considered bottled waters.
- Glacial water. Water from a source directly from a glacier.
- Natural water. Water(such as spring, mineral, artesian or well water) obtained from an approved underground source and not from a municipal or public water-supply system. This water is untreated other than by filtration
- Purified water. Water produced by distillation, de-ionization or reverse osmosis, which contains not more than 10 mg/L of total dissolved solids.

What is in bottled water?

- Naturally-carbonated natural mineral water after treatment, replacement of gas and packaging, has the same content of gas from the source.
- Non-carbonated natural mineral water does not contain carbon dioxide in excess of the amount necessary to keep hydrogen carbonate salts dissolved.
- De-carbonated natural mineral water has less carbon dioxide than when it came out of the ground.
- Carbonated natural mineral water has been made bubbly by adding carbon dioxide.
- Demineralized water has the dissolved solids (minerals) removed.
- Re-mineralized water, after filtration that removes all the solids, has some minerals put back in.
- Ozonized water has ozone added to kill bacteria.
- Super-oxygenated water contains extra oxygen, most of which escapes when you twist the cap.

Water and Your Health

There are healthy, affordable alternatives to bottled water that in the long run cost a fraction of the price of bottled water. All you need is the proper water restructuring and filtration system. One of the first steps in taking control of your health and banishing fear is recognizing that that your body requires a constant and consistent supply of healthy water. Again, water is the most important compound you put into your body. Therefore, it follows that health-wise, water

will either be the best or the nastiest thing that you consume.

No matter what the specific health or fitness goal, one cannot achieve the maximum benefit from any health program without drinking the right kind of water in the proper amount. All experts agree, that next to the air we breathe, water is the most essential thing we will ever put in our bodies.

The hydration rate of water is the amount of water that is absorbed by individual cells. Higher rates of hydration means much superior and faster metabolic processes are occurring within the cell, making it better able to flush toxins and move nutrients to where they are needed. The structure of the water molecule is significant in this process. Therefore, it is imperative to know the hydration rates of different types of water. Distilled and reverse osmosis water is lifeless and worthless with a hydration rate of only 10%, the Wellness Filter has a hydration rate of over 60% and the Water Vitalizer Plus has an exceptionally rapid hydration rate of over 80%. When the Wellness filter is used together with the Water Vitalizer the overall hydration rate is an astounding 95%.

It should be obvious why I keep stressing the importance of consuming chemical free, clean, restructured and alkalizing water. When your body is properly hydrated, all health programs become more powerful, more efficient and work faster. And, for those who simply want to maintain their good health, drinking clean restructured water is just as essential to maintaining strength, fitness and vital wellbeing. This may very well be as close as we can get to the true fountain of youth.

Remember Folks: The road to better health is as close as your telephone. Over 27 years of successful practice and experience in fighting chronic illness is available to you for the price of a bottle of supplements. It includes a one on one consultation with me, unlimited follow up support, as well as my highly acclaimed and comprehensive health video "A Healthy Family."

It is never too late to start living a healthy life.

Live Long and Live Well and God Bless,

Dr. Darrell L. Wolfe AC, Ph.D

Call The Wolfe Clinic today!
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products that help

The Wellness MG-III

Premium Home FilterHome Filter

The Wellness MG-III is a medium to large home filtration and enhancement system that delivers the purest and most natural tasting water available. It effectively reduces chlorine, harsh tastes and odors, and other harmful contaminants, while it also enhances the water with delicate ions and minerals. At the same time it conditions without salt or resins, reducing unsightly spotting and scaling associated with hard water.

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The Wellness Kitchen S III can be easily installed without any plumbing assistance.

Water Vitalizer Plus

The Wolfe Clinic is proud to present a revolutionary appliance called the "The Water Vitalizer Plus".

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Royal Tea

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Unlike conventional mineral pots, KeoSan FIR Pure Water System is uniquely designed to infuse clean, pure water with FIR (Far Infrared Rays) energy.

Wellness Shower

We recommend people seeking the best possible protection from chlorine to seriously consider a Wellness Shower.

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