NOT ALL WATER IS CREATED EQUAL

pH, Purity & What You Need to Know About What You Drink — Larrea Naturopathic Medicine / Tecaya Health

The surprising truth: Many of the most popular bottled waters in the U.S. — including Dasani, Aquafina, Ozarka, and Smart Water — are actually acidic. Some are as low as pH 5.8. You may be paying for "water" that is working against your body's chemistry every single day.

Why does this matter? Your body works hard to maintain a slightly alkaline blood pH of 7.35–7.45. Consistently drinking acidic water adds to your body's acid load — requiring more buffering resources, depleting minerals, and contributing to an internal environment where inflammation, fatigue, and chronic disease thrive. Your water is one of the simplest things you can upgrade.

UNDERSTANDING PH — THE BASICS



◄ ACIDIC ALKALINE ►

What pH Means

pH stands for "potential of hydrogen" — it measures how acidic or alkaline a substance is on a scale of 0 to 14.

- pH 7.0 = perfectly neutral (pure water)
- Below 7.0 = acidic (the lower the number, the more acidic)
- Above 7.0 = alkaline (the higher the number, the more alkaline)
- Each step on the scale is 10x more acidic or alkaline than the last — pH 6 is 10x more acidic than pH 7, and pH 5 is 100x more acidic

Your blood pH: 7.35–7.45 — slightly alkaline. Your body will do whatever it takes (including pulling calcium from bones) to maintain this range. The food and water you consume either help or hinder this process.

Alkaline vs. Acidic Water — What's the Difference?

Alkaline water:

- pH above 7.0
- Naturally alkaline from mineral-rich springs, volcanic rock filtration, or ionization
- Contains buffering minerals: calcium, magnesium, potassium, bicarbonate
- Supports the body's natural alkaline environment
- Better hydration at the cellular level — smaller water clusters penetrate cells more easily

Acidic water:

- pH below 7.0
- Often purified tap water stripped of minerals and not remineralized
- Contributes to the body's acid load over time
- Can leach minerals from teeth and bones with long-term use
- May taste slightly flat or harsh

BOTTLED WATER PH COMPARISON — KNOW WHAT YOU'RE DRINKING

BRAND	PH	RATING	NOTES
Essentia	**9.5**	✓✓ Excellent	Ionized alkaline water; one of the most alkaline bottled waters available. Good hydration option.
Evamor	**9.0**	✓✓ Excellent	Naturally alkaline artesian water from Louisiana. Clean source, high alkalinity.
Alexa Springs	**8.1**	✓ Good	Natural spring water with mild alkalinity. A solid everyday choice.
Nikken PiMag	**8.0**	✓ Good	Filtered and mineralized water system; good for home filtration use.
Icelandic Glacial	**7.5**	✓ Good	Naturally filtered through volcanic rock in Iceland. Clean, neutral-to-slightly alkaline.
Mountain Valley Spring	**7.5**	✓ Good	Classic spring water from Arkansas. Neutral pH, good mineral content.
Fiji	**7.5**	✓ Good	Naturally filtered through volcanic rock. Good silica content. Slightly alkaline.
— — — NEUTRAL pH — — —	**7.0**	**— Neutral —**	*Pure water is pH 7.0 — exactly neutral. Anything below is acidic.*
Sam's Choice (Walmart)	**6.9**	~ Caution	Slightly acidic. Purified municipal water — adequate but not ideal.
Smart Water	**6.7**	✗ Acidic	Vapor-distilled with added electrolytes but still acidic pH. Marketing misleads.
Texas Crystal	**6.7**	✗ Acidic	Acidic spring water. Not recommended for daily use.
Aquafina (PepsiCo)	**6.4**	✗ Acidic	Purified tap water (municipal source). Consistently acidic. Avoid as daily water.
Perita	**6.4**	✗ Acidic	Acidic spring water. Not recommended as primary hydration.
Dasani (Coca-Cola)	**6.3**	✗ Acidic	Purified tap water with added minerals. Acidic and a poor choice for daily hydration.
Ozarka	**5.8**	✗ ✗ Avoid	One of the most acidic bottled waters on the market. Significantly acidic — avoid.

WHY PH & WATER QUALITY MATTER FOR YOUR HEALTH

Effects of Chronic Acid Load

Drinking acidic water regularly is not acutely dangerous, but over time it adds to your total acid burden — and your body has to constantly work to compensate.

- Depletes buffering minerals — calcium, magnesium, potassium pulled from bones and tissues to neutralize acid
- Contributes to bone density loss over time
- Promotes an inflammatory internal environment — chronic disease thrives in an acidic environment
- May worsen acid reflux and digestive discomfort

Benefits of Alkaline & Mineral-Rich Water

- Provides buffering minerals — reduces the body's need to pull from bone reserves
- Supports optimal enzyme and metabolic function
- Better cellular hydration — some research suggests smaller water clusters in ionized water penetrate cells more effectively
- Supports detoxification — the liver and kidneys work more efficiently in an alkaline environment
- Reduces acid reflux symptoms for many people
- Supports bone density — alkaline minerals directly benefit skeletal health

The Problem with Tap Water

Even if you're not buying bottled water, tap water carries its own concerns that most people don't think about.

Common tap water contaminants:

- Chlorine and chloramine — added as disinfectants; disrupt gut microbiome and have been linked to bladder cancer with long-term exposure
- Fluoride — added to most municipal water; accumulates in the pineal gland and thyroid; associated with lower IQ in high-dose studies
- Lead — from aging pipes, especially in pre-1986 homes; no safe level for children

- Impairs enzyme function — most enzymes work optimally at slightly alkaline pH
- Weakens immune function — pathogens and cancer cells thrive in acidic conditions
- Contributes to fatigue — cellular energy production is less efficient in an acidic environment
- Tooth enamel erosion — acidic water softens enamel over time

- May reduce oxidative stress — some alkaline waters have antioxidant potential
- Supports healthy gut microbiome — most beneficial bacteria prefer a neutral-to-alkaline environment

Important note: Alkaline water is not a cure-all and should not be extremely high pH (above 9.5) on a daily basis without guidance. The goal is avoiding acidic water — not drinking the most alkaline water possible.

- Atrazine — agricultural herbicide; common in Midwest water; linked to hormone disruption
- Pharmaceuticals — traces of hormones, antibiotics, antidepressants found in municipal water supplies
- Microplastics — increasingly detected in tap water worldwide
- PFAS ("forever chemicals") — industrial chemicals found in water near manufacturing sites

Check your local tap water quality at EWG's Tap Water Database: ewg.org/tapwater

THE BEST HOME FILTRATION OPTIONS

Reverse Osmosis (RO) — Most Comprehensive

Reverse osmosis filters water through a semipermeable membrane that removes up to 99% of contaminants — including fluoride, lead, arsenic, atrazine, PFAS, nitrates, and most pharmaceutical residues.

- Removes the widest range of contaminants of any home filtration method
- Produces very clean, pure water
- Important: RO removes beneficial minerals too — remineralize with trace mineral drops or a remineralization filter stage
- Under-counter systems: iSpring, APEC, or AquaTru (countertop) are excellent options
- Cost: $150–$400 for a quality system; pennies per gallon to operate

Berkey Filter — Best for Countertop

Gravity-fed carbon block filter that removes bacteria, viruses, heavy metals, chlorine, pharmaceuticals, and many pesticides. Does not require electricity or water pressure.

- Does not remove fluoride on its own — requires add-on fluoride filters (PF-2)
- Excellent for renters or those who don't want under-counter installation
- Long filter life — each filter set lasts 6,000 gallons
- Travel Berkey available for smaller households

Other Good Options

Whole-house carbon filter:

- Filters chlorine and chloramine from all water in the home — including shower water (your skin and lungs absorb chlorine in the shower)
- Does not remove fluoride, heavy metals, or PFAS — best combined with under-sink RO

Activated carbon pitcher filters (Brita, ZeroWater, etc.):

- Removes chlorine and some contaminants — better than nothing
- ZeroWater removes more contaminants than Brita and includes a TDS meter
- Does not remove fluoride, pharmaceuticals, or heavy metals adequately
- Good as a secondary filter or temporary solution

Kangen / alkaline ionizer machines:

- Produce highly alkaline, ionized water with antioxidant potential
- Require pre-filtration for best results — install carbon pre-filter
- Higher cost ($1,500–$4,000) but long-lasting

Bottom line on home filtration: A quality home filter is almost always superior to bottled water — more economical, more consistent, less plastic waste, and better for the environment. Invest in your water.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR WHEN CHOOSING WATER

What to Look For

- pH of 7.5 or above — choose spring or alkaline water
- Natural mineral content — calcium, magnesium, potassium, silica
- Source transparency — spring, artesian, or glacial sources are preferable to purified tap
- Glass or BPA-free packaging — plastics leach chemicals into water, especially in heat
- Low TDS (total dissolved solids) does NOT always mean better — minerals matter
- For daily use: Essentia, Evamor, Mountain Valley, Fiji, or Icelandic are solid choices

What to Avoid

- pH below 7.0 — acidic water adds to your body's acid burden
- "Purified" water without remineralization — stripped of minerals and often acidic
- Dasani, Aquafina, Ozarka, Smart Water — consistently acidic municipal water sources
- Plastic bottles left in hot cars or stored long-term — heat accelerates plastic leaching
- "Enhanced" waters with artificial flavors, sweeteners, or food coloring

Practical Tips

- Invest in a reusable stainless steel or glass water bottle — keep it filled with filtered or quality spring water
- If you use a home RO filter: always add trace minerals back — RO water is too "empty" without them
- Check mineral content on the bottle label — calcium and magnesium are particularly important
- Mountain Valley Spring Water in glass bottles is one of the best commercially available options in the U.S.
- For travel: Essentia or Evamor are widely available at most grocery and health food stores
- Track your EWG tap water report — search your zip code at ewg.org/tapwater to know exactly what's in your municipal water

The goal is not perfection — it is consistent improvement. Upgrading your daily water is one of the easiest, most impactful changes you can make for your long-term health. Start with what you can access and afford, and improve from there.

You are what you drink. Water is the foundation of every cellular process in your body. Make it count.