

Study: Drinking water helps cut heart disease risk

LOMA LINDA, CA — Drinking high levels of water can significantly reduce the risk of coronary heart disease, say researchers at Loma Linda University.

Officials at the college said the results of a study to be published in the *American Journal of Epidemiology* reveal that drinking high amounts of plain water is as important as exercise, diet, or not smoking in preventing coronary heart disease.

"Basically, not drinking enough water can be as harmful to your heart as smoking," said Dr. Jacqueline Chan, principle investigator and lead author of the article.

The study found that California Seventh-day Adventists who drink five or more glasses of plain water a day have a much lower risk of fatal coronary heart disease compared to those who drink less than two glasses per day.

The study, "Water, Other Fluids, and Fatal Coronary Heart Disease," indicates that things like whole blood viscosity and plasma viscosity, which are considered independent risk factors for coronary heart disease, can be elevated by dehydration.

The water study is part of the original Adventist Health Study, which began in 1973. Both researchers are also coinvestigators for the new Adventist Health Study.

While not as glamorous, the degree of benefit from drinking plain water reportedly surpasses drinking a moderate amount of alcohol, taking aspirin, and other preventive measures, with none of the adverse side effects.