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Water, Nature's Most Precious Commodity

The Earth is a very watery planet. Water covers almost 71% of the Earth's surface, and the total volume of water on Earth is about 332,500,000 cubic miles. While this is a huge amount of water, only 0.77% of that is freshwater suitable for humans to use. Moreover, only a much smaller fraction of this freshwater is actually readily available or clean enough for humans. This scarcity of clean water makes it a precious commodity which is important for the health of all humans.

There are many ways our water supply can become contaminated. Some ways are just due to natural processes, like groundwater can pick up arsenic from rocks underground or become very briny from too many minerals dissolved into it. More disturbing is that much of the unclean freshwater tends to runoff into sources of clean water like aquifers, rivers, and lakes. Human and animal wastes can also make water unclean by polluting it with harmful bacteria like *E. coli*. It is very necessary for us to keep all of our available water clean.

Clean water is important to human health for a variety of reasons. Water contaminated from chemicals can cause severe problems like nervous system or organ damage.

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and developmental or reproductive effects. Even some forms of cancer can be caused by drinking contaminated water for long periods of time. Water full of bacteria and disease-causing microbes can make people sick with stomach pain, diarrhea, vomiting or even worse. Elderly people, newborns, or people with weak immune systems could die from infections or sickness caused by unsafe water. Unfortunately, more and more people continue to lack clean water all around the world each year.

The scarcity of clean freshwater is increasing every day due to climate change and population growth. As the Earth warms our weather patterns change and more places are receiving less rain which feed our main sources of freshwater. Furthermore, as the population increases, we need to increase industry and agriculture which increases the chance of water being contaminated. All of this increases the demand for an already limited and stressed resource.

In conclusion, water is definitely nature's most precious commodity due to its scarcity and demand. Proper management of our water supply is crucial for the health of all humans.

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