

Healthy Beverages

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There's nothing like an ice cold drink in the summer to cool you down, but not all beverages are created equal. Which beverages are the best choices?

Juice

Juice may seem like a healthy choice but even products labelled '100% juice' or 'no sugar added' still contain a lot of sugar. As well, juice is missing the fibre that a piece of fruit has. Juices purchased from juice bars are costly. It's best to limit juice intake and eat the whole fruit more often. If you are drinking juice, choose 100% fruit juice and remember that ½ cup (125 mL) is one serving.



Regular Soft Drinks and Diet Soft Drinks

Regular soft drinks contain no nutrients but are high in calories and sugar. Limit these beverages most often. Many people are concerned about the health effects of artificial sweeteners in diet soft drinks. Health Canada has approved the use of artificial sweeteners in beverages however it is a personal choice whether you want to include them in your dietary pattern. [Click here for more information on sweeteners.](#)

Smoothies

Similar to juices, smoothies seem like a healthy choice. If you are purchasing a smoothie from a restaurant, it is likely a large portion containing a high amount of sugar. Alternatively, preparing a smoothie at home allows you to control the size and ingredients making it a great on-the-go snack or meal. [Click on this link for an Apple Blueberry Smoothie recipe.](#)



Coffee and Tea

Coffee and tea count towards your fluid needs for the day. They do not cause dehydration unless you are having more than 400 mg of caffeine in a day. That is the same as about 3 cups (750 mL) of black coffee or 4 cups of black tea (1L) in one day. Limit the amount of sugar and cream added to your coffee or tea to reduce your sugar and fat intake.

Water

You may have heard that you need 8 glasses of water per day. While this may be true for some people, it could be too much or too little for others. How much water you need in a day depends on many factors such as your activity level, body size and any health conditions you may have. A way to tell if you are

hydrated is looking at your urine. It should be a pale yellow to clear colour. If it is a dark yellow, you could be dehydrated and need to include more fluids into your day. If you find drinking water is too plain for your tastes, here are some ways to spruce it up:

- Lemon or lime wedges for a burst of citrus juice
- Add a no sugar added flavouring such as Crystal Light or Mio
- Try some frozen berries in your water for a pop of colour
- Slice up cucumber slices and add mint leaves
- Try sparkling water or club soda for a fizzy no sugar or calorie drink

