



Healthy Eating: Rethink Your Drink

Calorie intake from sugared drinks nearly tripled in the last 30 years. Today, sugar-sweetened beverages are the single largest contributor to calorie intake in the United States and are linked to a range of health problems, including obesity, dental cavities, high blood pressure, high cholesterol and type 2 diabetes. According to the Harvard Journal of Public Health, just one soda a day doubles a woman's risk of diabetes. Two sodas a day raise the risk of heart disease by 40%. Heavily sugared "coffee drinks" are a new part of the problem that could negatively impact your health.

Water: The Smart and Healthy Choice

Water is your body's principal chemical component, making up 60% of your body weight. Water is necessary for most of your body's metabolic functions and helps flush our systems of waste products. Yet, many people go through life dehydrated—causing tiredness, low energy, and headaches. It's common to mistake thirst for hunger, so staying well hydrated will also help you make healthier food choices.

Water is the best drink you can choose: it is calorie and sugar free, and as easy to find as the nearest tap.

- For a quick and inexpensive thirst-quencher, carry a water bottle and refill it throughout the day.
- Make water more exciting by adding slices of lemon, lime, cucumber or watermelon, or drink sparkling water.
- Add just a splash of 100% juice to plain sparkling water for a refreshing, low-calorie drink.

Ways to Increase Your Water Intake

Quit the sugar habit: The average can of sugar-sweetened soda or fruit punch provides 150 calories. If you were to drink just one can of sugar-sweetened soft drink every day, and not cut back on calories elsewhere, you could gain up to 15 pounds in a year. Cutting back on sugary drinks may help control your weight and may lower your risk of type 2 diabetes.

Go calorie free naturally: Diet drinks with artificial sweeteners may condition our taste buds to crave super-sweet foods. Water is the best calorie-free beverage—but if it's just too plain on its own, add a squeeze of lemon or lime, or a small splash of 100% fruit juice. Plain coffee and tea are also healthy calorie-free choices, in moderation.

Sources:

- 1) www.cdc.gov
- 2) www.rethinkyourdrinknow.com
- 3) <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/cpns/Pages/RethinkYourDrink-Resources.aspx>

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The rule of thumb is to drink at least 8 glasses of water a day.
