
Soft drinks, juice and sweet drinks – limit intake

Summary

- Drink plenty of water instead of sugary drinks like cordial, energy drinks, sports drinks, fruit drinks, vitamins style waters, flavoured mineral waters and soft drinks.
 - Drinks containing added sugars are not required for good health, and may increase the risk of weight gain in children and adults
 - Sugary drinks contribute to tooth erosion and decay.
 - If looking for an energy boost during or after exercise, reach for some fruit (mandarins, melon wedges or cut oranges) and water.
 - If you are looking for a pick-me-up in the morning or early afternoon try nature's original fast food – pears, bananas, plums or try a fruit yoghurt or a small handful of unsalted nuts.
 - Follow the Australian Guide to Healthy Eating and select foods and drinks from the five food groups.
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The Australian *Dietary Guidelines* recommends that all Australians limit their intake of drinks containing added sugar, including sugar-sweetened soft drinks and cordials, fruit drinks, vitamin-style waters, flavoured mineral waters, energy and sports drinks.

Sugary drinks are not required for good health and may cause health problems if drunk in large amounts. Drink plenty of water instead of drinks with added sugars.

Reasons to limit sugary drinks

Drinks containing added sugar include sugar-sweetened soft drinks and cordials, fruit drinks, vitamin-style waters, flavoured mineral waters, energy and sports drinks. Consumption of sugary drinks provides additional energy (kilojoules) to the diet, but no other essential nutrients such as protein, minerals vitamins or dietary fibre.

There is strong evidence of the association between the consumption of sugary drinks and excess weight gain in both children and adults, as well as reduced bone strength, and tooth decay .

Limit artificially sweetened soft drinks

Some soft drinks contain artificial sweeteners instead of added sugar. Artificially sweetened drinks add very little energy (kilojoules) to the diet and therefore do not contribute directly to weight gain. However, artificially sweetened drinks still maintain the 'habit' of drinking sweet drinks and there is some evidence that consumption of all soft drinks, both diet and sugar sweetened, may lead to decreased bone density as people may drink less milk.

Whether sweetened with sugar or artificial sweeteners these drinks are acidic. Frequent consumption can contribute to the erosion of tooth enamel, a major factor in tooth decay.

For good oral health, tap water has an advantage over many commercially available drinks as it has the beneficial effects of added fluoride. Tap water is also the best choice of drink for hydration (replacing the fluids you lose).

Drinking reduced fat milk helps people to meet their target for the food group '*milk, yoghurt, cheese and/or their alternatives*'.

The amount of sugar in soft drinks





Soft drinks are now commonly sold in 600 ml bottles, which means people are consuming up to 16 packets (teaspoons) of sugar with each large sugary drink consumed.

Sugary drink	Sugar packs (1 sachet/packet = 4 g sugar 1 LEVEL tsp = 4 g sugar)
Regular softdrink 600 ml bottle	16 packs (64 g)
Regular softdrink 375 ml can	10 packs (40 g)
Energy drink (250 ml)	6 packs (27 g)
Sports drink (600 ml)	9 packs (36 g)
Vitamin/Nutrient-Style Waters (600 ml)	7 packs (29 g)
Fruit drink (250 ml) ("Pop-top" 25% orange juice)	6.5 packs 26 g
Cordial (250 ml) (blackcurrant, 25% juice, reconstit. to directions)	22.75 g 6 packs

Recommendations for Australians

The **Australian Guide to Healthy Eating** provides people of different sex, age and life stage with a recommended eating plan that includes all the nutrients you need to grow and develop, and to live a healthy life.

A variety of foods from the five food groups provide valuable nutrients for the body, while discretionary ('sometimes' or 'extra') foods and particularly drinks provide additional energy (kilojoules), but do not generally satisfy hunger. For adults, sugary drinks do not usually contribute to feeling full, people tend to eat their usual meal – leading to excess energy intake and weight gain over time.

Discretionary foods and drink, including sugary drinks, are not an essential or necessary part of our dietary

patterns. If chosen, they should be included only occasionally and in small amounts.

Where to get help

- Your **doctor**
- **Dietitians Association of Australia** Tel. **1800 812 942**
- **Nutrition Australia**
- **Eat For Health** - Australian Dietary Guidelines

This page has been produced in consultation with and approved by:

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