

Beverage Breakdown

How liquid calories affect our diet, hunger and weight

May 2024

Nutrition tips from DuPage Senior Citizens Council and Kane Senior Council



What's in a beverage?

Beverages can contain nutrients like amino acids, carbohydrates, lipids, vitamins, and minerals. They can also contain phytochemical compounds, phenolic acids, and flavonoids. Some beverages can also contain energy and or sugar.

Sometimes we want a beverage with calories and sometimes we don't. Sometimes we want a beverage with a pick-me-up and other times we don't.

Reading labels and knowing what to look for can help determine which drink is right for which situation.

Drink Water

Water does the body good. It helps your muscles and brain stay hydrated for optimal physical and mental performance. Drinking adequate water can help you lose weight and keep your skin healthy, young and clear.



Suggestions

- Choose unsweetened coffee or tea in moderation, no more than 2 cups daily or per your MD.
- Low-fat or fat-free milk provide protein and many vitamins and minerals.
- If you are going to drink juice, choose a small glass (4 ounces) of 100% fruit juice.
- No more than 1 to 2 alcoholic drinks for men or no more than 1 for women
- Avoid "diet" drinks made with artificial sweeteners or try and keep consumption to one or less per day
- Avoid drinks sweetened with sugar or high-fructose corn syrup
- Be careful not to consume too many "Fizzy" drinks as the bubbles are often produced from phosphoric acid which can eat away at tooth enamel.

Soft drinks, sweetened teas, fruit drinks and many sports and "energy" drinks can be high in sugar, calories and sometimes caffeine. Coffee drinks often are surprisingly high in calories, fat and sugar.

Alcoholic drinks are packed with empty calories and are not nutrient dense.

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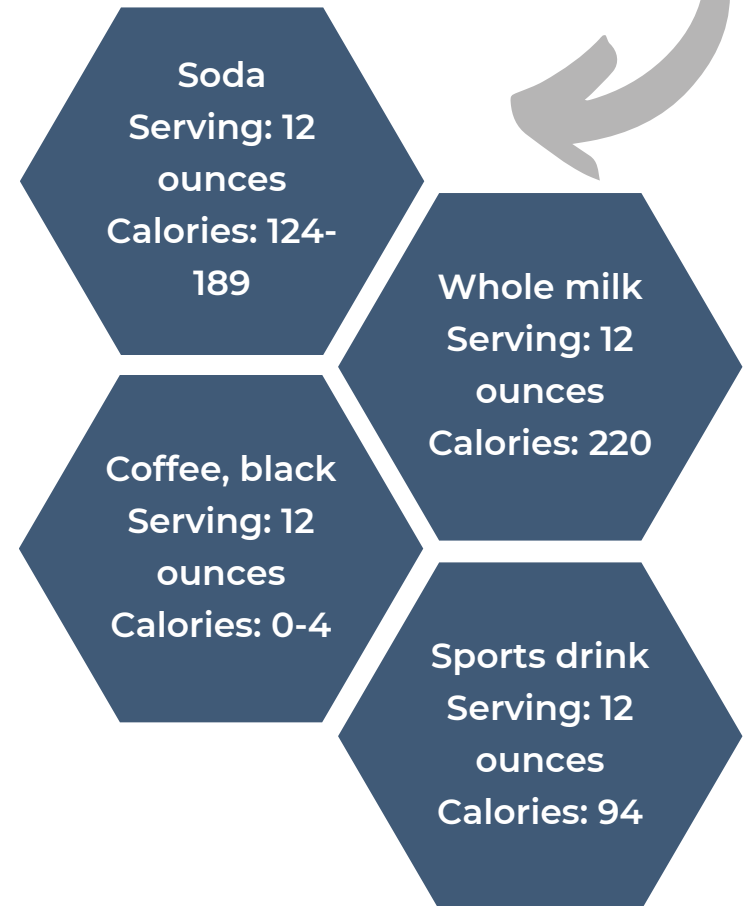
Managing your Drinks

- 1** Be a label reader. Check caffeine, sugar and saturated fat before you drink. If the numbers aren't on the label, check the company's website.
- 2** Steer clear of super-charged "energy" drinks. Do not consume highly caffeinated beverages with alcohol.
- 3** Start with a smaller portion. Moderation is always a smart way to treat your body well.

How much water?

- How much water you need depends on your size and activity level; larger, more active people need more fluids.
- Drink enough for your urine to be mostly colorless and odor-free.
- Don't forget that many foods are made up primarily of water!
- Rather than drinking your calories look to food to fill you up and stay hydrated.

Want to see where your beverage calories are?



Knowing where calories come from is key to a healthy balanced diet.

Too many calories from beverages usually will result in less calories available for food or weight gain if too much of both is taken. Drink more water and choose caloric beverages wisely!