

Beverages

Beverage Tips in Small Sips



- ◆ Chill a pitcher of water in the refrigerator for easy access.
- ◆ Offer water between meals when child is thirsty.
- ◆ Have water available when playing outdoors.
- ◆ Add a slice of cucumber, lime, lemon, watermelon or other fruits to water for variety.
- ◆ Fill re-usable water bottles with tap water for on-the-go convenience.
- ◆ Serve beverages in regular cups instead of sippy cups to reduce risk of cavities.
- ◆ Provide skim or 1% milk at 2–3 meals (2–2 ½ cups per day).
- ◆ Serve 100% juice (not fruit punch or fruit drinks).
- ◆ Offer up to 4–6 ounces of juice as part of a meal or snack.
- ◆ Model healthy beverage choices for preschoolers.

Benefits of Water

- ◆ Water helps digest food and move nutrients throughout the body.
- ◆ Water regulates body temperature and keeps skin hydrated.
- ◆ Fluoridated water helps build and maintain strong teeth.





The best drinks for preschoolers are milk and water.

Photograph by Paula Cartwright

CAUTION:

Watch the added sugar

Soda, energy drinks, sports drinks and fruit-flavored drinks are major sources of added sugar in the diets of Americans. Using drinks high in sugar during the preschool years may increase the risk of becoming overweight in adulthood.

Why Drink Milk?

Milk helps build and maintain strong, dense bones. Children who are two and older should drink 2—2 ½ cups of low-fat (1%) or skim milk every day.

Help preschoolers get enough, but not too much, milk. Some children do not consume enough milk, while others may prefer milk to other foods.

If you are concerned about lactose intolerance or milk allergies, check with your child's doctor.

Some families choose not to drink cow's milk. Other beverages are available, such as, almond, soy, rice and coconut drinks. The protein, calcium and Vitamin D content can vary greatly so read and compare the labels.

Facts on Other Drinks

Be sure to read the nutrition facts labels on beverages. Some drinks are high in calories and have little or no nutrients.

Energy drinks, sports drinks, flavored waters and other beverages often have added sweeteners, caffeine or herbal ingredients that may not be appropriate for young children.

New research supports limiting juice intake to 4–6 ounces daily. Here is why:

- ◆ Juice has calories; too many calories may lead to becoming overweight.
- ◆ If juice replaces milk or calcium-fortified soy beverages, your child may not get enough calcium.
- ◆ Sipping excess juice may promote cavities or cause diarrhea.

UW-Extension Family Living Programs

"Raising Kids, Eating Right, Spending Smart, Living Well"



For more information, please contact

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[Link To References](#)

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