

AVOID

SUGARY DRINKS



It's easy to forget that we take in energy (kilojoules) through drinks as well as food. You can drink a lot of kilojoules without realising it.

Plain tap **water** is the best drink choice. It's cheap, quenches your thirst and has no kilojoules. Buy a plastic water bottle so you can take your own water everywhere you go. Keep water in the fridge so you can have a cold drink when you're thirsty.

Soft drinks are very high in sugar and kilojoules, and provide no nutritional value other than fluid. A 600ml bottle of regular soft drink has around 15 teaspoons of sugar in it. It contains over 1000 kilojoules, which is equivalent to:

- ▲ 2 slices of fruit toast with a thin spread of margarine
- ▲ 1 cup of ice-cream
- ▲ 2 English muffins
- ▲ almost 3 Tim Tams
- ▲ 200g tub of reduced-fat vanilla yoghurt
- ▲ 3 large peaches

Diet soft drinks generally have no added sugars (only artificial sweetener) and are lower in kilojoules than regular soft drinks. They still provide no nutritional value other than fluid.

It's interesting to note that the size of drinks containers has increased 2-3-fold in the last 50 years. There is evidence

that drinking a lot of soft drinks can contribute to being overweight.¹

Fruit juice (100% fruit) can be part of a healthy diet if you have small quantities of it (no more than half a cup) as it is high in sugar. A 250 ml glass of orange juice has almost 6 teaspoons of sugar and although it does contain some vitamins, it's better to eat a whole piece of fruit as it has more vitamins and fibre, and will be more filling.

Cordials are high in kilojoules and you should limit how much you drink.

Sports drinks are high in sugar and kilojoules. If you're doing a moderate amount of exercise, you won't need a sports drink for energy. However, they may be useful for endurance exercise (more than 90 minutes) or when a quick recovery is needed.

Energy drinks are very high in sugar and caffeine. You should limit how much of these you drink.

Reduced-fat milk is a good choice as it can be one of the three serves of dairy you need each day. It's also a good source of calcium and protein. But be aware that flavoured milk contains added sugar.

Green and black tea and **coffee** are good sources of antioxidants. A diet high in antioxidants may reduce the risk of many diseases including heart disease and certain cancers. Switching to reduced-fat milk and limiting the amount of sugar you add will help reduce the amount of kilojoules.

Comparison of four drink choices (all 250ml)²

Drink	Teaspoons of sugar in 250ml	Kilojoules in 250ml	Minutes of brisk walking required to burn off 250ml
Plain water	0	0	0
Coffee (instant with a dash of reduced-fat milk and no sugar)	½	85	4
Fruit juice	5 ½	394	19
Soft drink (regular)	6 ½	437	21

1. A NSW Centre for Public Health Nutrition (now known as Cluster of Public Health Nutrition, Prevention Research Collaboration, University of Sydney) project for NSW Health; 2009.
2. Xyris Software. FoodWorks 2007 [Computer software]. Version 5; 2007 [retrieved April 2010]

Supported by



Government of Western Australia
Department of Health



livelighter.com.au