



BEVERAGE SMARTS

Be Smart About Beverages

Beverage choices are just as important as our food choices. However, calories associated with beverages can often add up inconspicuously, and rather quickly, throughout your day.

Most Americans consume more added sugar than what is recommended, so one easy way to help reduce and monitor intake is by taking a closer look at your beverage choices.

So, What Are Some Key Tips When Choosing Beverages?

1. Opt for water as your beverage of choice most of the time. Plain water or sparkling water are both great options. Tired of regular water? Add fruit and herbs to give water a refreshing taste.

Different people need different amounts of fluids depending on their lifestyle and body size, but an easy way to determine hydration status is by checking your urine. Light colored or clear urine typically means that your body is well-hydrated. Dark colored urine may be a sign that you need to drink more water.

2. When choosing juice, opt for 100% juice varieties – just make sure to read the ingredient list. Fruit is naturally sweet on its own and requires minimal, if any, added sweetener. When possible, choose the whole fruit over fruit juice to reap the nutritional benefits, such as dietary fiber.

3. Sports drinks that contain electrolytes, such as Gatorade, should be reserved for high intensity exercise lasting more than one hour, or moderate to high intensity exercise outside in a hot, humid climate.

4. When choosing soda, opt for smaller cans to control portion size. What about diet soda? The research suggests that diet soda is safe to consume, however, some studies have found that diet soda does not satisfy the appetite with calories, and therefore may cause some people to eat more later on in the day. Bottom line: be mindful of your overall consumption, and opt for smaller portions when possible.

5. Milk naturally contains calcium for strong bones and teeth, as well as protein for satiety. All milk varieties (non-fat, 1%, 2% or whole), contain the same exact nutrients – the only difference is their fat content. Soy milk is a non-dairy alternative that is also protein-packed. However, many other plant-based milks, such as almond or cashew, contain very little protein, so choosing a fortified version may be best, depending on your dietary needs.

