

# Beverages for Health & Sports



## Recommended Beverages

These following beverages should be consumed most often:

- Water
- Milk or fortified soy beverages
- 100% fruit and vegetable juices

## Sports Drinks

These beverages are not appropriate for everyone and Canada's Food Guide recommends limiting the use of sports drinks.

### When could sports drinks be used?

Sports drinks may be beneficial when involved in hard physical activity continuously for over an hour and when excessive sweat losses occur. They are designed to replace glucose (sugar) in muscles, and fluid and electrolytes (sodium and potassium) lost in sweat.

Generally, if exercising for less than an hour or exercising at a low to moderate intensity, plain water will quench your thirst and help you perform at your best.

## Energy Drinks

These beverages are not recommended for sports.

### What you should know about energy drinks:

- Energy drinks contain synthetic caffeine (the amount of caffeine that is listed on the label) and additional caffeine from herbs such as guarana and yerba maté. It is hard to know exactly how much caffeine is actually in the product.
- The caffeine, high sugar content and carbonation of energy drinks can interfere with hydration, which makes them poor choices for use during exercise.
- Energy drinks are NOT recommended and should not be sold or provided to children and youth.

For healthy food and beverage ideas, check out Canada's Food Guide at [www.healthcanada.gc.ca/foodguide](http://www.healthcanada.gc.ca/foodguide) and Dietitians of Canada at [www.dietitians.ca](http://www.dietitians.ca)

## Caffeine

What you should know about caffeine:

- Caffeine is a stimulant.
- Caffeine can be found in coffee, tea, iced tea, cola, energy drinks and chocolate products.
- Too much caffeine can cause nervousness, irritability, difficulty sleeping and rapid heartbeat.
- Due to the health effects of caffeine, and because the tolerance for caffeine depends on body weight, Health Canada has set maximum daily limits for caffeine intake for different age groups. The following charts show the maximum amounts for different age groups and also the amount of caffeine in several common beverages.

Maximum daily limits for caffeine	
400 mg	Adults
300 mg	Women of childbearing age
85 mg	10-12 years
62.5 mg	7-9 years
45 mg	4-6 years

Source: Health Canada, 2011

Caffeine content of common beverages (per 237 ml serving)	
135 mg	Coffee
80 mg	Energy Drink
43 mg	Tea
36-46 mg	Pop
30 mg	Green Tea
8 mg	Milk
5 mg	Hot Cocoa

Source: Health Canada, 2012

## Sugar

What you should know about sugar:

- Many beverages contain large amounts of sugar.
- Sugar can interfere with hydration, increase calorie content and contribute to tooth decay, especially when sipped over long periods.
- The following chart shows the sugar content in a 250 mL (1 cup) serving of some common beverages. Most of these beverages are purchased and consumed in larger portion cans (e.g. 355 mL) or bottles (e.g. 591 mL) so the amount of sugar consumed is even higher.

Sugar content of common beverages (per 250 ml serving)	
33 g	Fruit Drinks and Fruit Punches
28 g	Pop
23 g	Iced Tea
16 g	Sports Drink, Fruit Flavour

Source: Health Canada, 2010. Nutrient Values in Some Common Foods

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