

What Can I Drink?

Healthy Drink Choices

Managing diabetes involves balancing what you eat and drink with physical activity and medicine, if needed. Food often takes center stage when it comes to diabetes, but beverages can also affect your weight and blood glucose. That's why the American Diabetes Association recommends drinks that have zero calories or are very low in calories. Water is one of the healthiest and easiest choices you can make.

What Drinks Are Zero-Calorie or Very Low-Calorie?

All of these drinks provide no or just very small amounts of calories and carbohydrate:

- Water (still or sparkling)
- Unsweetened or diet teas
- Coffee
- Diet soda
- Other zero- and low-calorie drinks and drink mixes

What Drinks Should I Avoid?

Regular soda, fruit punch, sports drinks, energy drinks, sweet tea and other sugary drinks are not healthy choices. These will raise blood glucose and may have several hundred calories in just one serving! See for yourself:

- One 12-ounce can of regular soda has about 150 calories and 40 grams of carbohydrate. This is the same amount of carbohydrate in 10 teaspoons of sugar!
- One cup of fruit punch has about 100 calories (or more) and 30 grams of carbohydrate.

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10 Zero- or No-Calorie Drinks

1

Water

2

Sparkling, seltzer, or mineral water

3

Unsweetened iced tea

4

Infused water (with crushed fresh mint, for example)

5

Unsweetened coffee

6

Water with a squeeze of lemon

7

Diet iced tea

8

Diet soda

9

Unsweetened hot tea

10

Zero- or no-calorie drink mixes



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What Can I Drink?

Bored with Water?

Here are some easy ways to jazz up plain water:

- **Squeeze in some zing.** A quick squeeze of lemon juice is delicious.
- **Infuse it with flavor.** Fill a pitcher with water and add sliced fruit or vegetables (oranges, berries, peaches, and cucumber are tasty), fresh herbs, or a combination of these fresh items to your water. Stick the pitcher in the refrigerator for a few hours so the flavors and aromas meld and you'll have a crisp, refreshing drink!
- **Use no- or low-calorie drink mixes.** Mix a single-serve packet with a bottle of water for an on-the-go option.

Or, choose other no-calorie drinks:

- **Opt for sparkling water for a change.** Or try seltzer, club soda or mineral water. Add a squeeze of lime or no-calorie flavoring for extra zing.
- **Try unsweetened tea and coffee.** Both are very low in calories and carbohydrate. Have you heard that the caffeine in these drinks causes dehydration? This effect is mild, so you can count coffee and tea as part of your total daily fluid intake.



What About Milk and Juice?

Low-fat and fat-free (skim or nonfat) milk and 100% juice with no added sugar are also healthy drink options. These drinks have more calories and carbohydrate than zero- and no-calorie drinks, but they also have important vitamins and minerals. In addition, milk provides protein. Just remember to control portion size, because the calories and carbohydrate can add up. Use a small glass instead of a large one to measure milk or juice. Some tips:

- **Choose low-fat (1%) or fat-free (skim or nonfat) milk.** Make sure that you count it in your meal plan. One cup of fat-free milk provides about 12 grams of carbohydrate, 80 calories, calcium and vitamin D.
- **Try plain (unsweetened) fortified soy, rice or almond milk.** These are great if you are lactose intolerant or don't like milk.
- **If you drink juice, choose juices that are 100% juice with no sugar added on the label.** Juice provides a lot of carbohydrate in a small portion, so count it in your meal plan and keep portions small. Just 4 ounces (1/2 cup) or less of juice contains 15 grams of carbohydrate and 60 calories.
- **Try low-sodium vegetable juice.** It has less carbohydrate than fruit juice, but plenty of vitamins. At just 50 calories and 10 grams carbohydrate for 1 cup, it's a healthy choice.



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For more information about healthy foods and drinks, visit diabetes.org or call 1-800-DIABETES (800-342-2383).