

### **What is a sugar-sweetened beverage?**

A sugar-sweetened beverage is a drink that contains added sugar. Examples include: non-diet soda, sport and energy drinks, Kool-Aid, sugary juices (any juice that is not 100% juice), sweetened coffee drinks, and sweet tea.

### **Can sugar-sweetened beverages make me gain weight?**

Drinking sugar-sweetened beverages adds calories to your diet that don't fill you up- meaning your body doesn't recognize these sugar calories the same way it recognizes calories with additional nutrients. The body doesn't feel satisfied after drinking them, and will still signal to your brain that you need to eat. Studies show that people who regularly drink sugar-sweetened beverages weigh more than those who do not.

### **Did you know...**

- A study conducted by the Harvard School of Public Health found that for each additional serving of juice drink or soda a child consumes per day, the child's chances of becoming overweight increases by 60%.
- To burn off 150 calories found in 12 oz of soda, an adult needs to walk briskly for 25 minutes and a child needs to bike vigorously for 30 minutes.
- A small, consistent extra 50 calories per day over the course of 1 year will result in a weight gain of 5 pounds.

### **Is there a recommended daily intake of added sugar?**

Calories can be broken down into two types: calories that come from necessary nutrients to sustain the health of our bodies and "discretionary calories." Discretionary calories come from the extra treats that we eat throughout the day. Discretionary calories are not necessary to for our bodies to function, and there is a recommended maximum amount allowed per day. The upper level of daily discretionary calorie allowance differs for men and women.

- For men, the upper level of discretionary calories is 150 calories. This equals 36 g of sugar or 9 tsp of sugar.
- For women, the upper level of discretionary calories is 100 calories. This equals 24 g of sugar or 6 tsp of sugar.

### **How many calories come from my favorite sugar-sweetened beverages?**

The table below lists popular drinks and their sugar content. Compare your favorite beverage to the limit for discretionary calories listed above. Do you exceed the recommended discretionary calorie allowance from drinks regularly? If you do, try one of the tips on the next page to decrease your sugar intake and prevent weight gain.

<b>Drink (per 12 oz)</b>	<b>Calories (from sugar only)</b>	<b>Amount of Sugar (g)</b>	<b>Teaspoons of sugar</b>
Coke	130 kcal	32 g	8 tsp
Mocha	150 kcal (360 kcal in the entire 12 oz drink)	37.5 g	9.3 tsp
Sweet tea	140 kcal	34.5 g	8.6 tsp
Rock Star Energy Drink	186 kcal	46.5 g	11.6 tsp
Gatorade or Hawaiian Punch	84 kcal	21 g	5.25 tsp

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## How can I cut back on sugar-sweetened beverages?

There are many ways to add flavor to your beverages without sugar. Try one of these options:

- Add slices of fruits or vegetables to water. Popular options include cucumber, lemon, orange, and lime.
- Make ice cubes with 100% juice. When drinking a glass of water, add a few juice ice cubes to the water to lightly sweeten your drink.
- Try sparkling mineral water, such as Mendota Springs or La Croix.
- Use a non-calorie sweetener like Crystal Light to add flavor without sugar.
- Mix 100% juice with mineral water to create a “juice soda.”
- Instead of buying mochas and other flavored lattes, try flavored coffees or add flavored Coffee-Mate to your coffee. This will save you on sugar and fat calories!
- Unsweetened iced tea. You can make this at home using black or green tea, herbal tea or fruit tea. Add lemon to give it a burst of flavor. Try the iced tea recipe below.
- If you still need something to make your drink sweeter, try an artificial sweetener. Truvia is a great option- it is a plant-based sweetener made from the Stevia plant.

### Recipe: Hibiscus Iced Tea

Are you looking for a flavorful drink without all of the sugar? Try this recipe, adapted from [www.diethood.com](http://www.diethood.com):

#### Ingredients

- 4 cups boiling water
- 8 hibiscus tea bags
- 3 packets of Truvia (optional)
- Ice
- 2 cups sparkling water
- ¼ cup mint leaves
- Strawberries

#### Instructions

1. In a large pitcher, combine boiling water and tea bags. Let steep for 30 minutes.
2. Remove tea bags.
3. Stir in Truvia, ice and sparkling water.
4. Add mint.
5. Refrigerate for 1 hour or until chilled.
6. Garnish with strawberries and serve.

### Do you have nutrition questions?

I am Gwenda Hill, the Registered Dietitian Nutritionist at North Clinic. I am here to help you reach your nutrition goals. My background includes working with men, women and children focusing on a variety of nutritional concerns. I can help with sustainable weight loss solutions, and healthy eating for a variety of health conditions, including: high blood pressure, high cholesterol, prediabetes, GI problems, and child nutrition concerns. If you would like an appointment to discuss any of the issues listed above or any other nutritional concerns, please ask your provider to submit a referral to the Nutritionist.