

Healthy Drinks for Kids in Summer

When children drink plenty of water regularly throughout the day, they stay hydrated. This is especially important in hot weather or when they are running around a lot. What kids drink can greatly affect how many calories they consume and the amount of calcium (needed to build strong bones) their bodies get. In Summer, drink fluids **WITHOUT SUGAR** to prevent dehydration.

Serve Water and Milk

For kids of all ages, water and milk are the best choices, so let them flow. Besides having zero calories, water is a no-sugar thirst-quencher. 1 cup of milk has 300mg of calcium, so it's a big contributor to a child's daily needs.

Here's how much calcium kids need each day:

- toddlers (1 to 3 years): 700 milligrams of calcium daily
- kids (4 to 8 years): 1000 milligrams
- older kids (9 to 18 years): 1,300 milligrams

The current daily dietary guidelines for milk or equivalent dairy products or fortified soy beverages:

- Kids ages 2 to 3 should drink 2 cups (480 milliliters)
- Kids 4 through 8 should have 2½ cups (600 milliliters)
- Kids 9 and older should have 3 cups (720 milliliters)

Choose fat-free (skim) or low-fat (1%) milk products most of the time.

Limit sugary drinks

When kids drink too much juice, juice drinks, sports drinks, and soft drinks, these beverages can crowd out the milk they need. Sugary drinks also can pile on the calories.



This chart shows the **calories and sugar in different beverages**:

DRINK	SIZE	CALORIES	SUGAR
Water	240ml	0	0g
Low-fat milk	240ml	100	11g
100% orange juice	240ml	110	22g
Juice (10% fruit juice)	240ml	150	38g
Powdered drink mix (with sugar added)	240ml	90	24g
Soft drink	240ml	100	27g



Put Limits on Juice

If your child likes juice, be sure to serve 100% juice. Follow these recommended daily limits:

- up to 6 months old: no juice
- 6–12 months old: 120ml always served in a cup
- 1–6 years old: 120–180ml of juice per day
- 7–18 years old: 240–360ml of juice per day



Say No to Soft Drinks

Soft drinks are commonly served to kids, but they have no nutritional value and are high in sugar. Drinking soft drinks and other sugared drinks can cause tooth decay & excessive weight gain. Colas and other soft drinks often contain caffeine, which kids don't need. In addition, soft drinks may be taking the place of calcium-rich milk.



That said, many kids like soft drinks and will request it. As a rule, don't serve it to babies, toddlers, or preschoolers. With older kids, let them know it's a once-in-a-while beverage.

Resources:

<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/drink-healthy.html>

<https://raisingchildren.net.au/toddlers/nutrition-fitness/healthy-eating-habits/healthy-drinks>

