

# Sports Nutrition Tips for Kids

## Water is the best hydration choice for:

- light to moderate activities of 90 minutes or less (e.g. baseball, dancing, playing at a park/playground)
- high intensity activities of 60 minutes or less (e.g. soccer game, hockey game, mountain biking)



### BEFORE Sports or Games

2-3 hours before an activity, eat a meal OR 1 hour before, eat a snack:

- Offer vegetables and fruits high in water (e.g. cucumber, celery, oranges, watermelon, and grapes)
- Drink water to stay hydrated, prevent muscle cramps and tiring quickly
- Avoid fried foods - fat takes more time to digest and can slow you down



### DURING Sports or Games

- Offer water
- Sweetened drinks are harder to absorb and can cause upset stomach during sports
- Kids should not need a snack
  - If a snack is offered, give vegetables and fruit high in water



### AFTER Sports or Games

- Within 30 minutes after the activity:
- Drink fluids (e.g. water, milk, or 100% fruit juice)
  - Offer a healthy meal or snack
    - Vegetables, fruit, grains, milk and yogurt give athletes energy

## Water is the way to GO!

### Water is the best choice to satisfy thirst:

- it keeps us hydrated, feeling energetic and alert
- it is natural, healthy and often free
- it has no sugar

### Healthy food and drinks build a body that is just right for your child. Healthy kids:

- learn better
- have more energy to be physically active



**HEALTHY KIDS**  
COMMUNITY CHALLENGE  
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## WHAT ABOUT SPORTS DRINKS?

Sport drinks are only appropriate for elite athletes participating in continuous intense activity for 60 minutes or more.



Most of the time kids **do not** need sports drinks! They add extra sugar and salt, and **do not** impact performance.

**Send water  
with your child  
EVERY DAY!**

## Hydration for Babies and Preschoolers:

Your baby gets enough to drink from breastmilk. Continue to breastfeed for up to two years or more, as long as you and your child want to.

After 6 months of age, water can be offered.

Offer drinks in an open cup, not in a bottle or a sippy cup. This helps your child develop drinking skills.



Kids who are used to drinking water at a young age are more likely to drink water later in life.



## ARE OUR KIDS TOO SWEET?

Sugary drinks are the largest source of sugar in kids' diets. Too much sugar can lead to health problems, tooth decay and cavities. Sugary drinks can bump out healthy choices. This makes it hard for kids to get the nutrition they need.

## DID YOU KNOW?

Fluoridated tap water is a safe and effective way to prevent tooth decay.



## DID YOU KNOW?

100% fruit juice (*no sugar added*) has a lot of natural sugar. It should only be an occasional treat.

**Whole fruits and vegetables** are a better choice; they give more nutrition and fibre, and keep kids satisfied longer.



**Expert guidance. Everyday eating.**  
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## Avoid or Choose Rarely:

These drinks have added sugar and bump out healthy choices. Most have few nutrients. They are not healthy choices for kids.

- ◆ Sports Drinks
- ◆ Slushies
- ◆ Energy Drinks
- ◆ Vitamin Enhanced Water
- ◆ Fruit Drinks
- ◆ Pop & Diet Pop
- ◆ Iced Tea & Coffee Drinks

## Choose Sometimes:

These drinks are high in sugar or salt. If offered to kids, limit amounts to 1/2 cup (125 ml) a day.

- ◆ 100% Fruit Juice
- ◆ 100% Vegetable Juice
- ◆ Sweetened Cow's Milk (*e.g. chocolate, strawberry*)
- ◆ Sweetened Milk Alternatives (*e.g. soy, almond, rice*)

## Choose Everyday:

These drinks have no added sugar and are the healthiest choices for growing children. Enjoy several times a day!

- ◆ Water
- ◆ Plain Milk
- ◆ Unsweetened Fortified Soy Beverage



## YOU CAN:

### Offer tap water and milk everyday!

- ◆ Stock your fridge with chilled water and healthy drinks
- ◆ Serve milk or water with meals and snacks; offer water the rest of the day
- ◆ For variety, add frozen berries, slices of orange, cucumber or fresh mint to water



### Help children get less sugar from drinks:

- ◆ Buy sugary drinks only rarely
- ◆ Buy smaller sizes
- ◆ Pour smaller servings

**Set a good example -**  
Choose healthy drinks yourself!