



HEALTHY HYDRATION

for children aged 5-11

Water

a good choice throughout the day because it hydrates without providing extra energy (calories/kilojoules) or risking harm to teeth.

Drink plenty

Milk

a useful source of nutrients, especially protein, B vitamins and calcium. Most children should drink reduced-fat milks. Unsweetened, calcium fortified dairy alternatives can also be included. Milky drinks containing added sugars such as milkshakes, hot chocolate and malted drinks should only be drunk occasionally.

Have regularly

Fruit and vegetable juices and smoothies

provide some vitamins and minerals and some can contain fibre. However, they also contain sugars and can be acidic so it's recommended to limit them to one small glass (150ml) a day and to keep them to mealtimes. 150ml counts as a maximum of 1 portion of 5 A DAY. They can be diluted with water to reduce acidity and sugars content.

Can have once a day

Sugar-free drinks

hydrate without adding extra sugars but it's a good idea for most drinks to be milk or water to avoid getting a taste for sweet drinks. Fizzy drinks can contain acids that can erode the outer surface of the tooth. Be aware that some of these drinks contain caffeine.

Occasionally

Tea and coffee

Caffeine is naturally present in tea and coffee. Small amounts are harmless but high intakes should be avoided, especially for young children. It's best for children to drink decaffeinated tea and coffee with reduced-fat milks and no added sugars.

Occasionally (and in small amounts if caffeinated)

Sugary drinks

best avoided as they provide sugars and few nutrients. Fizzy drinks can contain acids that can erode the outer surface of the tooth. Be aware that some of these drinks contain caffeine.

Avoid

Sports and energy drinks

can be high in sugars and energy drinks may contain high levels of caffeine or other stimulants. These drinks are not suitable for young children.

Not suitable for children

Younger children need relatively smaller servings (e.g. 150-200ml) and older children need larger servings (e.g. 250-300ml)

The amount of fluid a child needs depends on many factors including their age and gender, the weather and how much physical activity they do, but generally they should aim to drink about 6-8 glasses of fluid a day (on top of the water provided by food in their diet).

This guide is intended to help parents, teachers and carers choose a balance of drinks for children aged 5-11 years.