

# Think about Drinks

*Concerned about your overweight child? Cutting back on sugary drinks may help.*



Recent studies are showing a link between sugar-sweetened drinks and weight gain in kids and teens. It's no wonder why: Many beverages like sodas, sports drinks and some juices have a lot of added sugar.

**Here's the good news:** By helping your kids cut back on sugary drinks, you can help them cut calories. Cutting calories—along with adding physical activity—is key in **slowing down the rate of weight gain**. For overweight children, slowing the rate of weight gain gives their bodies a chance to catch up with their weight as they grow.

## *What to offer kids instead of sugary drinks*

- **Water**—plain or fruit-flavored (no-calorie or low-calorie). For young kids, use fun-shaped cups or containers.
- **Seltzer**—plain, pre-flavored, or mixed with unsweetened juice.
- **Lemonade or fruit drinks made with no-calorie sweeteners**, such as SPLENDA® No Calorie Sweetener, instead of sugar.
- **Nonfat or low-fat milk** (after age 2 years), which provides calcium, protein and vitamin D. Children 2 to 8 years old should have 2 cups of nonfat/low-fat milk or dairy products per day; children 9 years and older should have 3 cups per day.



*Just one 12-ounce can of regular (non-diet) soda contains the equivalent of 10 teaspoons of sugar.*



## *Winning kids over to low-sugar drinks*

- **Have low-sugar drinks around.** Kids drink what's handy. So don't stock the sugary stuff.
- **Give them choices** so they won't feel deprived: bottled water, sugar-free lemonade, nonfat/low-fat milk, iced tea flavored with no-calorie sweetener.
- **Take your kids to the supermarket** and let them pick their choice of no-calorie or low-calorie drinks.

Toddlers and pre-schoolers

## Think outside the (juice) box

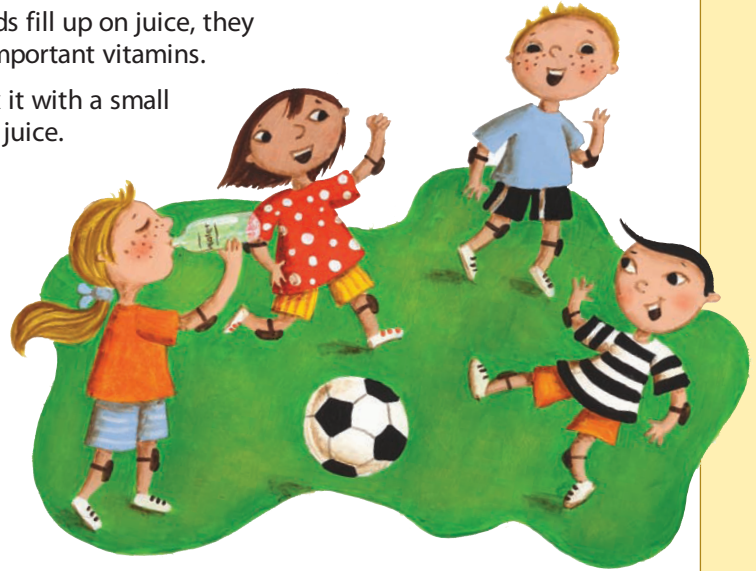
Juice boxes are convenient—but they're not always healthy or low in calories. Follow these guidelines:

- Choose 100% fruit juices; other types will have added sugar. Look for those with fiber and calcium.
- Stay within these daily limits: 4 – 6 ounces per day for ages 1 to 6; 8 – 12 ounces per day for ages 7 to 18.
- Avoid juices at least 2 hours before meal times. When kids fill up on juice, they have less room for healthy foods—and they miss out on important vitamins.
- Reduce the juice..slowly. If your kids are big on juice, mix it with a small amount of water; every few days, use more water and less juice.

Tweens and teens

## Avoid hidden calories and caffeine

- Sports drinks. In most cases, kids don't require these sugary drinks. Suggest plain water.
- Oversized sugary drinks. Many bottled soft drinks actually contain two (or more) servings. Choose smaller drink sizes.
- Vitamin waters. These can contain 50 or more calories a serving. Point kids toward waters that have no calories.
- "Energy" drinks. Many have more caffeine than colas do. Talk to your kids about the potential problems with caffeine, such as increased anxiety and sleep problems.
- Sodas of a different shade. Some orange, lemon-lime and vanilla sodas contain caffeine. Read the labels.
- Gourmet coffee drinks. These can pack a lot of calories — especially if they have flavorings, whole milk, and whipped cream. Tell kids about the calorie content of these drinks.



Cutting sugary beverages can be #1...

## 2 simple changes your family can make

Families can slow the rate of weight gain in overweight children by making two simple changes every day:

1. Cut 100 calories
2. Add 2,000 steps

Kids have lots of options for adding 2,000 steps—and they don't need a lot of time:

- Family exercise: 10 minutes biking; 15-20 minutes walking
- Sports: 7 minutes of soccer; 10 minutes of basketball; 15 minutes of baseball
- Fun: 15 minutes of dancing; 25 minutes of bowling

For more ideas on cutting 100 calories and adding 2,000 steps, go to [www.splenda.com](http://www.splenda.com) and click on A Child's Weight Matters.



SPLENDA® Brand Sweetener can be used safely by the whole family, including children, women who are pregnant or nursing, and people with diabetes.