

Smart Sippin'

How to Choose the Right Beverages for Your Child



Contents

[I'm Soooo Thirsty!](#)

[Smart beverage choices for your child are: water, milk, and 100% fruit juice.](#)

[Kids' Favorite Beverages and the Food Guide Pyramid](#)

[Moore Milk](#)

[Fruit Juice Please!](#)

[Apple Juice Is Recommended First](#)

[Sometimes Sips](#)

[What's Inside?](#)

[Smart Sippin' For Your Kitchen \(recipes\)](#)

[10 Tips For Smart Sippin'](#)

[Authors](#)

Smart Sippin'

You've heard a lot about what your child needs to eat to stay healthy. But what should your child be drinking?

Many parents have lots of questions:



"Is apple juice the best juice for my child's young tummy?"

"When can my child start drinking low-fat milk?"



"How can I get my school-age son to drink more water?"

"Are soft drinks really 'bad' for children?"





"How do fruit drinks stack up against 100% fruit juices?"

If your child is between the ages of one and 12, this brochure can help you answer these, and many more important questions, about what and how much children need to drink to stay healthy. In addition, you'll discover how to make wise beverage choices so that your child can learn how to be a *Smart Sipper*. Remember to always discuss your child's diet with your pediatrician, family physician or other health professional, especially if your child is under the age of one.

[\[Top of Page\]](#)

I'm **Soooo** Thirsty!

When your child asks for a drink, how much should you offer -- 4 ounces, 8 ounces, more?
And what beverage will best quench his or her thirst?



Here are a few Smart Sippin' guidelines that can help you keep your child healthy and hydrated.

[\[Top of Page\]](#)

*Children need
8 to 12 cups of
water (fluids) every day.*

Your child's body needs water for so many reasons: to help regulate body temperature, to carry nutrients and oxygen to cells and remove wastes, to lubricate joints, and to protect organs and tissues. Compared with adults, children need to be especially careful about getting enough water because:

- children don't handle temperature extremes as well
- children have more skin surface for their body weight
- children don't always ask for a drink when they're thirsty
- children sweat less
- children get hotter when they exercise

Children need 8-12 cups of water every day. You may think that sounds like a lot. However, keep in mind that other beverages like milk and fruit juice, as well as the water in the foods we eat, all count toward the daily water total.

[\[Top of Page\]](#)

Smart beverage choices for your child are: water, milk, and 100% fruit juice.

According to the American Dietetic Association's *Complete Food and Nutrition Guide*, **water is often the best choice for quenching your child's thirst.** Water is a vital nutrient that is readily available and inexpensive. In addition, milk and 100% fruit juice make good beverage options. Not only do they provide water, but milk is rich in nutrients including bone building calcium, and 100% fruit juice provides many of the nutrients that are found in the fruit itself (such as vitamins, minerals and phytonutrients).

*Some Smart Sippin' tips
for getting your child to
drink water:*

- Buy a fun looking water bottle or special cup for them to drink their water.



- Encourage them to take a sip each time they pass a drinking fountain.
- Bring a supply of bottled water when traveling in the car.
- Let older children suck on ice cubes.
- Keep an easy-to-pour pitcher of water in the refrigerator and toss in a few sliced lemons or limes.

[\[Top of Page\]](#)

Kids' Favorite Beverages and the Food Guide Pyramid

The United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Food Guide Pyramid illustrates how healthy children age two and older can eat and drink healthfully. Every day it's important that your child consumes at least the minimum number of recommended servings from each of the food groups.

When chosen wisely, some beverages, like milk and 100% fruit juice, can count as a daily serving from a food group. For example, a 3/4 cup serving of 100% apple juice counts as one of the 2-4 servings your child needs each day from the Fruit Group. On the other hand, a fruit drink that is only 10% juice would be considered a "sweet" and fall under the Fats, Oils, and Sweets category and could not be counted as a Fruit Group serving. (*Definitions of various fruit beverages*)

Here's Where Beverages Fit In The Food Guide Pyramid:

Milk, Yogurt, & Cheese Group - (2 - 3 servings) - milk: skim, 1%, 2%, whole; chocolate milk; milk shake; yogurt drinks
(1 serving = 1 cup)

Vegetable Group -



Fats, Oils, & Sweets -
5% and 10% fruit drinks and punch;
lemonade; fruit-flavored ades; powdered
fruit drinks; soft drinks. Use sparingly

Fruit Group - (2 - 4 servings),
- 100% fruit juices like: apple juice, grape juice,

(3 - 5 servings) - tomato juice and carrot juice
(1 serving = 3/4 cup)

(1 serving = 3/4 cup)

pineapple juice, orange juice, grapefruit juice

Bread, Cereal, Rice, & Pasta Group
no beverages
(6 - 11 servings)

Check out the Pyramid and see what food groups some of your child's favorite beverages fit into. Keep in mind that, like foods, all beverages can be part of a healthy diet. The key is to drink a variety of different beverages as part of a well-balanced diet.

[\[Top of Page\]](#)

Moore Milk

Besides water, another important beverage your child should drink every day is milk.

Milk provides several essential nutrients that will help your child's bones grow stronger and stay healthy. Here's a closer look at just a few nutrients milk has to offer:

CALCIUM - helps build strong bones and teeth, helps slow bone loss in later years, and it's involved in nerve function, muscle contraction, and blood clotting.

VITAMIN D - enables your child's body to absorb calcium.



PROTEIN - helps build muscles, bones, and other tissues, and serves as a backup energy source if your child doesn't get enough carbohydrate or fat.

Smart Sippin' tips for getting your child to drink milk:

- Serve milk at breakfast, lunch, and dinner for an easy three servings-a-day.
- Make milk shakes or yogurt smoothies for a refreshing after-school snack.
- Dip graham crackers into milk and slurp down the leftover crumbs in

the glass.

- Add milk when preparing hot breakfast cereals like oatmeal or cream of wheat.
- Whip up a mug of hot cocoa using milk, and don't forget to toss in a few marshmallows for fun.

Some common questions parents ask about milk:

"How much milk should my child drink each day?"

While there is no exact amount of milk that your child needs, he or she should consume 2-3 servings from the Milk, Yogurt, and Cheese Group every day. An 8-ounce glass of milk counts as one serving from this food group.

"At what age can a baby start drinking milk?"

Most babies are ready to start drinking whole (cow's) milk after their first birthday. Prior to this they should be drinking breast milk and, if breast feeding is not possible, iron-fortified infant formula should be fed throughout the first year. For children under one year of age, whole milk does not contain enough iron and linoleic acid, and it contains too much sodium, potassium, and protein.

"When can my child start drinking low-fat milk?"

Children between the ages of one and two should drink whole milk to make sure that they are receiving the fat and calories they need for brain development and proper growth. However, if your child is over the age of two and his or her health professional feels your child is not underweight, he or she may be ready to start drinking reduced-fat, low-fat, or fat-free milk ([Definitions of these milks](#)).

"My child is lactose intolerant. How can I be sure he/she's getting enough calcium?"

Many children who are lactose intolerant can tolerate up to two glasses of milk a day if they are spread apart, one at breakfast and one at dinner. Other options include choosing other calcium-rich foods from the Milk, Yogurt, and Cheese Group, or buying enzyme treated milk and/or calcium-fortified fruit juices.

[\[Top of Page\]](#)

Fruit Juice Please!

In addition to water and milk, another healthful beverage your child should drink is **100% fruit juice**. Kids love its naturally sweet taste, and there's such a wide variety of fruit juices to choose from, such as apple juice, orange juice, and pineapple juice. 100% fruit

juice offers many of the same nutrients as its fruit counterpart (with the exception of fiber), and counts as a serving from the Fruit Group in the Food Guide Pyramid. Unless the label says otherwise, all the sugar in 100% fruit juice comes from the fruit itself. Healthcare professionals agree that 100% fruit juice, which has natural sugars, is better for a child than a fruit drink with added sugar. Listed below are some of the key nutrients many 100% fruit juices provide:

CARBOHYDRATE -
your child's main energy
source

**VITAMINS AND
MINERALS** - essential
for growth and
development and a variety
of functions that the body
performs every day.



PHYTONUTRIENTS
- these are newly discovered
food components that occur
naturally in plant foods and
may provide important
health benefits similar to the
antioxidants we hear so
much about.



[\[Top of Page\]](#)

Apple Juice Is Recommended First

A recent national survey of pediatric health professionals confirms that apple juice is recommended most often as the first juice for infants and toddlers.*

Apple juice is one of the best juices for a baby's young tummy.

Its relatively mild acidity makes it easy for most babies to tolerate. Babies love the sweet taste of apple juice, so it is easily accepted. Also, apple juice has a mild laxative effect that may help provide relief from constipation commonly experienced by little ones. And, adding apple juice fortified with vitamin C to infant cereal can help infants absorb more iron, an important nutrient for growth and development.

Older kids love apple juice, too.

As toddlers get older, they have so many other beverage choices, but don't forget about apple juice. If the beverage is labeled "apple juice" you know it's the juice and nothing but the juice.

**Source: 1998 Gallup Poll of pediatricians and pediatric nurses.*

[\[Top of Page\]](#)

Some common questions parents ask about fruit juice:

"When can my baby start drinking fruit juice?"

The best time for your baby to start drinking fruit juice is when he or she is ready to start drinking from a cup. This typically happens around six to eight months of age. Because children tend to love the naturally sweet taste of 100% fruit juice, this may help motivate your baby to accept new tastes and foods.

"How much juice should my child drink each day?"

For young tummies, you may want to start with 2-4 ounces and gradually add more as the child gets older (e.g., toddlers can have 4-6 ounces a day). For children at least two years old, 6 ounces (3/4 cup) of 100% juice (such as apple or orange juice) counts as a serving from the Fruit Group, of which 2-4 servings are recommended each day. For children 7 to 18 years old, 8-12 ounces of 100% juice is recommended.

"Is sugar added to fruit juices?"

Unless otherwise stated on the label, 100% fruit juices have no added sugars or sweeteners. Therefore, the sugar you see listed on a 100% fruit juice Nutrition Facts label comes from the naturally occurring sugar in the fruit. On the other hand, beverages that are only 10% juice or labeled as fruit drinks do contain added sugar or other sweeteners (and may have some naturally occurring sugar as well).

"Why are juices pasteurized?"

The majority of fruit juices are pasteurized. Like milk, when a fruit juice is pasteurized it means that it has been heat treated to help it last longer and to kill bacteria that may have occurred prior to or during processing. The nutrients and flavor are generally not affected by pasteurization.

"What's better for kids: 100% fruit juice or fruit drinks?"

All beverages can fit into a healthy diet. However, if you want a juice beverage that contains a variety of nutrients that come from the fruit itself and has no added sugar, then 100% fruit juices are your best bet.



Smart Sippin' tips for getting your child to drink 100% fruit juice:

- Mix equal parts of sparkling water with apple juice, or other fruit juice, for a refreshing, fizzy drink.
- Freeze 100% fruit juice in plastic cups and make your own juice-sicles or freeze juice in ice cube trays.
- Buy 100% fruit juice in boxes, squeeze bottles, or pouches for a quick and convenient drink.
- Serve 100% fruit juice, diluted with equal parts of water, after soccer or basketball practice or the "big" game of your choice.
- Create your own 100% fruit juice "punch" by mixing together your favorite fruit juices and serving in a punch bowl.

[\[Top of Page\]](#)

Sometimes Sips

There will be times when your child asks for a soda at a fast food restaurant or asks for a 10% juice drink he or she might have seen advertised on television. Are these forbidden beverages? Not at all. All foods, when eaten occasionally and in moderation, can fit into a healthy diet.



Here are a few tips about choosing "sometimes sips:"

- 10% fruit drinks, fruit flavored beverages, "ades," and soft drinks all contain added sugars or sweeteners and count as a selection from the Food Guide Pyramid Fats, Oils, and Sweets category that should be used sparingly.
- Diet or low-calorie soft drinks contain non-nutritive sweeteners and no nutrients. They, too, should be used sparingly.
- Soft drinks that contain caffeine may have a diuretic effect causing your child to lose rather than maintain water. Decaffeinated soft drinks would be a better choice if soft drinks are used.

[\[Top of Page\]](#)

What's Inside?

Parents of Smart Sippers always read labels before choosing a beverage for their **child**. You can cut your label reading time in half, simply by looking for the following terms on the front of a beverage bottle or carton. Each of these terms has been legally defined by the government. Here's what they mean in language that's easy to swallow:



All beverages that contain juice (or imply that they contain juice) must declare the percentage of juice on the information label above the Nutrition Facts panel.

Fruit juice - the product contains 100% juice from a single juice or a juice blend.

Fruit drink, juice beverage, juice cocktail or "ade" - the product contains less than 100% juice. Read labels carefully -- some contain only 5% or 10% fruit juice and have sweeteners added.

Apple juice - the product must be either: 100% apple juice made directly from apples or made from apple juice concentrate that has had the water restored (i.e., "apple juice from concentrate"). No sugar is added to either of these products.

Fresh - the juice is not processed (it has not been frozen or has not been pasteurized).

Pasteurized - like milk, many juices have been heat treated to help them last longer and kill bacteria that may have occurred prior to or during processing. Nutrients and flavor are generally not affected by this process. Shelf stable and frozen fruit juices have been pasteurized or heat-treated. (If refrigerated juices are pasteurized, it will say so on the label.)

Milk

Fat-free milk - the product contains 0 grams of fat and 80 calories per 8 fluid ounces. Also known as skim or non-fat milk.

Low-fat milk - the product must contain 3 grams of fat or less per 8 fluid ounces and has approximately 100 calories. Also known as 1/2% or 1% milk.

Reduced-fat milk - this product has at least a 25% fat reduction compared to whole milk and usually contains 5 grams of fat and 120 calories per 8 fluid ounces. Also known as 2% milk.

Whole Milk - this product has 8 grams of fat and 150 calories per 8 fluid ounces.

Water

While there's no label on tap water, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) ensures that it's perfectly safe and fine for children to drink. Should you opt to purchase bottled water, here are a few definitions:

Sterile - this appears on many of the infant, nursery, and baby drinking water products and means that the water meets the Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) standards for commercial sterilization and is free of bacteria.

Purified (distilled) water - the water has been demineralized by distillation (evaporation and recondensation) or other comparable processes.

Spring water - the water naturally flows out of the earth at a particular spot and is bottled at or near its source. It's not altered by the addition or deletion of minerals.



[\[Top of Page\]](#)

Smart Sippin' For Your Kitchen

Here's two quick, easy, and tasty recipes you and your child can

enjoy making together.

Apple Juice Jigglers (makes 45 cubes)

Ingredients:

Nonstick cooking spray
 1- 1/2 tablespoons unflavored gelatin
 3/4 cup water
 1 6-ounce can frozen apple juice concentrate

Directions:

1. Very lightly coat a 9" x 5" loaf pan.
2. Soften gelatin in water in a saucepan for 5 minutes.
3. Heat over low heat, stirring constantly until gelatin dissolves. Remove from heat.
4. Add frozen apple juice concentrate; mix well. Pour into pan.
5. Cover and refrigerate. Chill until set, about 2-3 hours.
6. Cut into one inch cubes and serve as a snack.



James and the Giant Peach-Apple Smoothie (make four 6-ounce servings)

Ingredients:

2 8-ounce cartons low fat peach yogurt
 1 6-ounce can frozen apple juice concentrate
 1/2 teaspoon almond extract (optional)
 4 ice cubes

Directions:

1. Add each of the ingredients in the order listed to a blender.
2. Blend until smooth and creamy.
3. Pour into glasses and serve.



[Top of Page]

10 Tips For Smart Sippin'

Now that you've read this brochure, you and your child are on the way to becoming *Smart Sippers*. If you still have questions about what or how much your child needs to drink, always check with your pediatrician, family physician or other health professional. Here's a quick review to help you remember some of the key points about *Smart Sippin'*:

- 1.** Start your baby off right by breast feeding throughout the first year as a major source of nutrition. If breast feeding is not available, use iron-fortified infant formula.
- 2.** One of the best first juices to feed your child is apple juice fortified with vitamin C. It's easily accepted and pleasing and unlikely to cause allergic reactions.
- 3.** When your baby is about 6-8 months old, start offering apple juice from a cup. Babies love the sweet taste of apple juice, and this may help motivate them to use a cup and accept new tastes and foods.
- 4.** After your baby's first birthday, he or she may be ready to start drinking whole milk.
- 5.** Children need about 8-12 cups of water (fluids) each day. Remember that nutrient-packed beverages like milk and 100% fruit juice, and the water in foods, all count toward the daily water total.
- 6.** The recommended time to start feeding your children low-fat milk and low-fat dairy foods is after their second birthday.
- 7.** Remember that a 3/4 cup serving of 100% fruit juice like apple juice counts as a daily serving from the Food Guide Pyramid's Fruit Group.
- 8.** Let your child have "fruit drinks" and soft drinks only occasionally. Like other sweets, they contain mostly added sugar,

and count as a serving from the tip of the Food Guide Pyramid — the Fats, Oils, and Sweets category that should be used sparingly.

9. Offer your older children 100% fruit juices as snacks or after sporting events. As children get older, they have a tendency to stop drinking 100% fruit juice and, consequently, they could be missing out on the health benefits of the juice.

10. Be a good role model for your child. When you're thirsty, reach for a glass of water, milk, or 100% fruit juice.

[\[Top of Page\]](#)

Written by
Jodie Shield, M.Ed., R.D., L.D.

Jodie Shield, M.Ed., R.D., L.D., is a registered dietitian, mother of three, and nutrition consultant who served as a national spokesperson for the American Dietetic Association for six years. She is senior partner in JM & Associates, a nutrition communications firm, and is an associate complementary faculty member at Rush University in Chicago. She writes regularly for pediatric publications.

Edited by
Marianne Neifert, M.D.
("Dr. Mom")

Marianne Neifert, M.D., known to millions of parents as "Dr. Mom," is a board certified pediatrician, mother of five, and clinical professor of pediatrics at the University of Colorado School of Medicine. She has authored several books and numerous articles on children's health issues. A featured guest on radio and television programs, Dr. Neifert lectures nationwide on parenting and family issues.



The American Academy Of Family Physicians Has Favorably Reviewed This Material. Favorable Review Means That Medical Information Is Accurate, But Does Not Imply Endorsement Of Any Conclusions Presented.

[\[Top of Page\]](#) [\[Home\]](#)