

What's to drink for Children?



1. Why do children need to drink?

- To replace the body water that they lose every day from sweating, breathing, and going to the toilet.
- If children don't drink enough they will dehydrate (their body water gets too low).
- Children lose body water faster than adults.

2. How many drinks do children need a day?

- This depends on your child's age and how active they are. Offer drinks often through the day to help them get enough.
- Your child will need to drink more if it is a hot day or they are being very active.

3. What is the best drink for children?

- Water is best. It is cheap, easy to get and healthy.
- Milk is good too. Offer plain (unflavoured) milk most of the time.
- Children over the age of 2 years can have reduced fat milk (not skim milk).
- Soy milk with added calcium can be used if your child doesn't drink cow's milk.
- Tea, coffee and alcohol should not be given to children.



Continued over page



4. Is fruit juice OK?

- Whole fruit is better than fruit juice.
- Too much fruit juice can fill your child up so they are not hungry for meals and snacks. Too much fruit juice can also cause diarrhoea and tooth decay.
- If you do offer fruit juice, use 100% fruit juice and dilute it 50:50 with water. Offer no more than 1 small glass a day.
- **Avoid** soft drinks, cordials, fruit juice drinks and vitamin C syrup drinks. Too much can cause tooth decay, weight problems and poor eating.



5. Hints for getting your child to drink water

- Have water and cups out so your child can help themselves.
- Offer drinks often through the day.
- Carry a water bottle with you when you go out.
- Try ice blocks or frozen drinks made from diluted fruit juice, milk or water. Add fruit such as strawberries, grapes and oranges to ice blocks to add extra interest.
- Always offer a drink with or after a meal or snack.
- Try using fun items such as straws or decorated cups.
- When you visit friends or relatives, ask for milk or water for your child before they offer juices, cordials or soft drinks.

Children over the age of one year should drink from a cup not a bottle.