

MAKING HEALTHY CHOICES FOR SENIORS: WEEK 10

Think about your drink

When making healthy choices, we often focus only on what we choose to eat rather than what we choose to drink. Most popular beverages such as pop, energy and sports drinks, fruit drinks, flavored coffee and sweet tea, have little to no nutrients and contain added sugar.

Sugar contains no nutrients and unlike the sugar found in fruit, added sugar does not occur naturally so it is not paired with the vitamins, minerals and fiber that help the body process sugar. Drinks made up of mostly added sugars are a particularly unhealthy choice. It's also easy to consume large amounts of these drinks. The lack of fiber also means that these drinks will not make you feel full, making it even easier to have too many.

Added sugar recommendations for women are no more than 6 teaspoons (24 grams) daily. For men, aim for no more than 9 teaspoons (36 grams) of added sugar daily. This means that even one 12-ounce can of regular pop would exceed this recommendation because a standard can of regular pop has 40 grams (10 teaspoons) of added sugar.



Water is an essential nutrient

Water is the best first choice when you are thirsty because your body needs water to function properly. By the time you feel thirsty, your body is already a little dehydrated. In fact, dehydration

is the number one reason for hospitalizations of adults over age 65. Water is needed for a variety of processes within the body. It is the basis for fluids such as blood and saliva. It provides lubrication for joints and helps remove waste. Remember that water is also found in many foods, including fruits and vegetables, but you shouldn't rely on consuming water from these foods to keep your body hydrated. Listen to your body and recognize when you are thirsty. Drinking water during and between meals can help you avoid dehydration.

The Nutrition Facts label and ingredients list found on food products supplies important information about a beverage. Sugar has many names including anhydrous dextrose, cane crystals, cane juice, corn sweetener, crystal dextrose, crystalline fructose, dextrose, evaporated corn sweetener, fructose, fruit juice concentrate, fruit nectar (any kind), glucose, high-fructose corn syrup (HFCS), honey, liquid fructose, maltose, molasses, pancake syrup and sucrose.



Did you know?

You can tell if you're properly hydrated by looking at the color of your urine. Dark yellow urine, like the color of apple juice, tells you that your body needs more water. Aim to drink enough water so that your urine is a pale yellow color or clear. Certain medications, foods or vitamins can also change the color of your urine.



WEEKLY RECIPE

Remember to wash your hands and prepare food safely.

Berry Blast Infused Water (serves 8)

1. Add **2 cups of berries** and **½ a sliced lemon** to **½ gallon of water**.
2. Use a spoon to lightly press on the fruit to let out some of the juices.
3. Let sit in the refrigerator for about an hour and enjoy! (If using frozen fruit, you'll want to let them thaw a little before the flavor will be released.)

MSU Extension programming

Michigan State University Extension helps people improve their lives by bringing the vast knowledge and resources of MSU directly to individuals, communities and businesses.

To help you be healthy at every stage of life, MSU Extension delivers affordable, relevant, evidence-based education to serve the needs of adults, youth and families in urban and rural communities. Programs focus on helping you gain the skills you need to buy and prepare nutritious, budget-friendly foods, increase your physical activity and stretch your food dollars.

MSU Extension's children and youth programs address needs and issues from birth through age 19, providing parents with educational resources related to your child's development

and giving youth the opportunity through 4-H programs to build leadership and teach practical life skills.

With a presence in every Michigan county, Extension faculty and staff members provide tools to live and work better. From a personal meeting to information online, MSU Extension educators work every day to provide the most current information when people need it to ensure success – in the workplace, at home and in the community.

For more information or to join a class, visit www.canr.msu.edu/outreach/. To find your local county office, visit www.canr.msu.edu/outreach/county.

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