



Healthy Choices

Start Now



When Your Child Asks For Juice

Your child may request fruit juice or fruit-flavoured drinks; however, Canada's food guide does not recommend juice. Canada's food guide recommends making water your drink of choice.

Offer water for thirst between meals and snacks. Plain milk and unsweetened fortified soy beverage* are also healthier drink choices with meals and snacks.

Avoid offering fruit juice and sugar sweetened drinks. **It is better to offer whole fruit.**

Concerns with juices and fruit drinks

- Juice can fill children up, making them less hungry for food.
- Sipping on fruit juice between meals can cause tooth decay, even when water has been added.
- Fruit juices contain a high amount of natural sugar. A glass of juice has the same amount of sugar as a glass of pop. Even though the sugar in fruit juice is from fruit, a natural source, your body treats all sugar the same.
- Too much sugar from any source can cause tooth decay, diarrhea, stomach upset and may lead to getting too many calories in a day.
- Fruit juice and fruit drinks may contain vitamins and minerals; however, these drinks are not considered to be a healthy choice. Eat whole fruit to get vitamins, minerals and fibre, which are important for good health.

*Fortified soy beverage is unsuitable as a main beverage for children under 24 months of age.

Fruit juice and fruit drinks are not the same.

Fruit juice:

- Products labelled fruit juice are made from 100 per cent real juice from fruit.

Fruit drinks:

- The words "made with real juice" does not mean it is 100 per cent real juice from fruit.
- Drinks labelled fruit drink, beverage, punch, or have 'ade' at the end of the name are not real juice because they are made with added sugar.
- Check the ingredient list and avoid products with added sugar, fructose or glucose.

Bottom line

If you do choose to offer juice:

- Choose pasteurized 100 per cent fruit juice.
- Limit the amount to 125 mL (½ cup) a day.
- Give in an open cup (not in a 'sippy' cup).
- Serve when the child is seated and eating a meal or snack.

For nutrition information and to find out if your child (18 months to five years) is a healthy eater using Nutri-eSTEP, go to www.nutritionscreen.ca.

If you have questions about Nutri-eSTEP or about your child's eating, call Telehealth Ontario to talk to a Registered Dietitian at 1-866-797-0000 (TTY: 1-866-797-0007).



Region of Waterloo
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