

SUGARY DRINKS

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Why sugary drinks? Aren't other junk foods just as bad for you?

- Although obesity is a complex problem with many causes, sugary drinks are a leading driver of the obesity epidemic and have been linked with diabetes. They also have little to no nutritional value.
- Americans consume 200-300 more calories daily than 30 years ago, with the largest single increase due to sugary drinks.
- Calories from drinks don't fill you up the same way calories from solid food do, meaning that if you have the sugary drinks, you will still be hungry for the candy bar.

2. What about diet sugary drinks and diet drinks? Aren't artificial sweeteners just as bad for you as sugar?

- While there are still some unknowns about diet beverages and they have little to no nutritional value, they contain significantly less calories than sugary drinks.
- We recommend water, seltzer, unsweetened tea, or low or no fat milk.
- **What are alternatives to sugary drinks?** Nowadays there are many low or no calorie drinks for you to choose. Ask your local store owner to carry your favorites.
- We recommend water, seltzer, unsweetened tea, or low or no fat milk.

3. Are fruit juices okay to drink?

- There is a difference between a "juice drink," which contains mostly sugar water and little, if any, actual fruit or vegetable juice and pure fruit juice. Try diluting your juice with water or seltzer. Even better than drinking juice is eating the fruit. The fruit contains nutrients, like fiber, that will fill you up.

4. Why should I cut back on sugary drinks?

- They are a leading driver of the obesity epidemic and many healthy alternatives exist. Just one 20 ounce sugary drink can have the equivalent of 16 packets of sugar!

5. Is tap water safe?

- New York City's provides some of the cleanest water in the United States.
- NYC tap water tastes just as good (if not better!) than bottled water and it's free.
- Try refrigerating tap water and serving it at mealtimes.

6. Why/how is being overweight associated with diabetes?

- It has long been known that being overweight is a risk factor for developing diabetes and other health problems. This doesn't mean that every individual that is overweight will develop health problems, but you will greatly increase the possibility of developing diabetes if you are overweight or obese.

7. What are the consequences of obesity and diabetes?

- Diabetes affects your whole body. It can cause nerve problems, amputations, vision problems, heart damage, and kidney damage.
- In New York City, obesity is responsible for an estimated 5,800 deaths per year, of which 2,000 are before age 70, and around \$4 billion in direct medical costs.

For more information contact the New York City Dept of Health or visit www.facebook.com/eatinghealthynyc.