

What's In Your Drink?

Tooth decay is the most common chronic childhood disease. However, it's also entirely preventable if the correct measures are taken.¹ Some of the largest contributors to tooth decay are sugary drinks such as soda, sports drinks, sweetened iced tea, sweetened coffee, fruit drinks, energy drinks and even flavored water. The sugar in these drinks sticks to the surfaces of teeth and the bacteria in your mouth feeds on the sugar. The result is acid that has the potential to cause cavities and other oral health problems.² The pain that follows can affect school attendance, eating, speaking and further development.³

Protect Your Child's Oral Health

Serve more water and plain milk

Water and milk are great alternatives to sugary drinks. Serve low- and non-fat plain milk to children. Although flavored milks are an alternative to other sugary drinks, they are not recommended due to containing added sugar.



Limit portion sizes

Although one cup of 100% fruit juice is recognized as one cup of fruit, the drink may contain as much sugar as a can of pop. Serving only a small amount or adding a splash of 100% fruit juice to water is a good idea. Eating the fruit is even better, as the whole fruit contributes more dietary fiber and less sugar.⁴



Avoid sweet liquids at bedtime

For young children, do not nurse them to bed with anything other than a pacifier or bottle of water. A bottle with milk, formula, juice or other sweet liquids can go unswallowed and provides the bacteria in the mouth something to feed on, leading to possible tooth decay.



Clean your child's teeth

Use a clean, soft cloth on baby teeth when they come in. Clean them after feedings and before bed time. Once your child is 2, you should begin brushing their teeth with a small amount of fluoride toothpaste.



For more information and tips on protecting your child's teeth from harmful sugary drinks, visit our website at DeltaDentalKS.com/SugaryDrink.

¹ American Dental Association, "Diet and Dental Health," <http://www.mouthhealthy.org/en/az-topics/d/diet-and-dental-health>

² Sugary Drink FACTS, "Tips for Choosing a Healthy Drink," <http://www.sugarydrinkfacts.org/resources/nutrition/Choosing-a-healthy-drink.pdf>
Department of Health and Human Services, "Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2015 - 2020," December 2015

³ Dental Caries and Beverage Consumption in Young Children Teresa A. Marshall, Steven M. Levy, Barbara Broffitt, John J. Warren, Julie M. Eichenberger-Gilmore, Trudy L. Burns, Phyllis J. Stumbo Pediatrics Sep 2003, 112 (3) e184-e191;

⁴ Department of Health and Human Services, "Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2015-2020," December 2015