

Wellness Articles

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If you would like to be added to the distribution list for these articles, please email: Rebecca.johnson2@albertahealthservices.ca. You will receive a monthly email containing articles for the upcoming four weeks.

An archive of past wellness articles is available at <http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/9966.asp>

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Healthy drinks during the holiday season

With Christmas, Hanukkah and other major holidays around the corner, many people think about the food celebrations that may come with it, but not the drink choices. Rethinking your drink can be helpful since what you drink doesn't help you feel full. This makes it easy to consume extra sugar from drinks and not even notice.

What is a healthy drink?

The 2019 Canada's Food Guide includes healthy drinks. Water is encouraged as the "drink of choice" to keep you hydrated.

Other healthy drinks include unsweetened lower fat white milk, unsweetened fortified plant-based beverages such as soy beverage and almond beverage and unsweetened coffee and teas.

Since many celebrations include drinks that have a higher fat and sugar content, here are a few ways to cut back on one or both.

- Choose black coffee, tea or herbal tea (with or without two-per-cent, one-per-cent or skim milk).
- Instead of a sugary drink like pop or juice, add flavor to water with cucumber slices, cranberries, sliced oranges or other fruit.
- If you choose to enjoy regular pop or fruit punch, cut back on the amount by alternating each sugary drink with water.

- For hot chocolate, you can try adding less chocolate mix or mixing $\frac{1}{2}$ hot chocolate with $\frac{1}{2}$ coffee or $\frac{1}{2}$ steamed milk. For eggnog, you can try $\frac{1}{2}$ egg nog/ $\frac{1}{2}$ lower fat milk

Alcohol

If you choose to drink alcohol, remember alcohol adds extra calories to your diet, along with the potential for other health risks and harms. There are lower risk drinking guidelines for Canadians which if followed can reduce health risks:

- Limit of 10 drinks a week for women with no more than 2 drinks a day most days
- Limit of 15 drinks a week for men, with no more than 3 drinks a day most days
- For more information on reducing the risks associated with alcohol go to the link below. <https://www.camh.ca/-/media/files/canadas-low-risk-guidelines-pdf.pdf>