

HEALTHY DRINKS. HEALTHY KIDS.

Healthy Beverage Consumption in Early Childhood

Recommendations from Key National Health
and Nutrition Organizations



Healthy Drinks, Healthy Kids

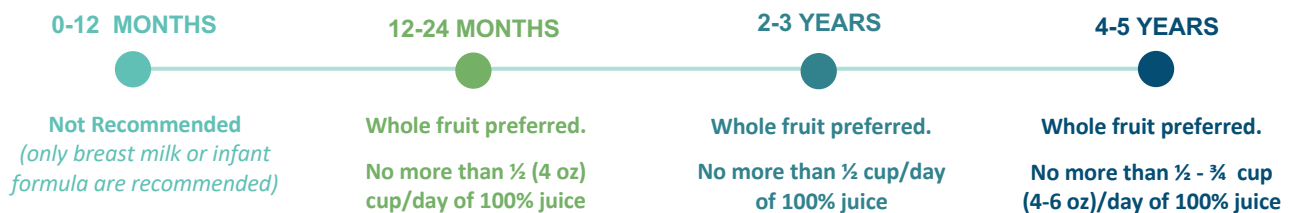
Research shows that what children drink – from birth through age 5 – can have a big impact on their health. That’s why some of the nation’s leading experts on health and nutrition developed recommendations to help parents and caregivers choose what’s best for kids. The full recommendations can be found at HealthyDrinksHealthyKids.org. This brief provides more details about **100% juice**.

All about 100% fruit juice

The fruit food group includes both fruit (such as fresh, frozen, and canned whole or cut-up fruit) and 100% fruit juice. Like fruits, juices come in many varieties, and the nutrient content is different for every variety. Some juices may have added vitamins and minerals, such as orange juice with calcium. 100% fruit juice has some important nutrients, but is lower in dietary fiber—a nutrient that young children don’t eat enough of—than fruit, and can contribute extra calories when too much is consumed. 100% fruit juice can be part of a healthy diet if you stick to the right amount.

What are the recommendations for 100% juice*?

It’s best for children to get their fruit servings from fresh, canned, or frozen forms of fruit without added sugars, instead of juice. If this isn’t possible, 100% juice can be used to help children get enough fruit in their diets.



*These recommendations apply to 100% fruit juice, 100% vegetable juice, and 100% fruit/vegetable juice blends.

If you offer 100% juice, serve it from a cup, and only during meals or snacks. If your child carries around a sippy or covered cup during other times of the day, water is the best drink to have in it. That’s because drinks that have sugars, whether natural (like the ones in 100% juice) or added (like the ones in sodas), can increase risk of cavities when they are in frequent contact with teeth between meals and snacks.

What’s the difference between 100% juice and other drinks with “fruit” or “juice” in the name?

Products that are labeled 100% juice do not have added sugar. Even though drinks with “fruit” or “juice” in the name may sound healthy, many juice drinks and fruit drinks are mostly water and sugar. Fruit-flavored drinks can have as much sugar as a soft drink! The added sugars and extra calories in these products outweigh any added nutrients they may have. Even homemade juices, like jugos naturales, may be made with added sugars and thus are not considered 100% juice.

100% juice nutrition labels should have simple ingredient lists like this one!

CONTAINS 100% JUICE

A Nutrition Facts label for a beverage. The label is titled "Nutrition Facts" and includes the following information:

CONTAINS 100% JUICE	
Nutrition Facts	
16 servings per container	
Serving size	4 fl oz
Amount Per Serving	
Calories	60
% Daily Value	
Total Fat 0g	0%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Trans Fat 0g	
Sodium 5mg	0%
Total Carbohydrate 15g	5%
Dietary Fiber 0g	0%
Total Sugars 14g	
Includes 0g Added Sugars	0%
Protein 0g	0%

Not a significant source of cholesterol, vitamin D, calcium, iron, and potassium.

*The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

WATER, APPLE JUICE CONCENTRATE, ASCORBIC ACID (VITAMIN C).

Thirsty for more? Visit HealthyDrinksHealthyKids.org

Why should we limit juice?

I thought 100% juice was healthy for my kids.

100% juice can be part of a healthy diet, but it doesn't have as much nutrition and isn't as satisfying for little bellies as fruit. Plus, it can contribute to dental cavities, and if kids drink too much, it can also lead to weight gain.

Limited data suggest that drinking 100% juice in early childhood can influence how much fruit juice and sugar-sweetened beverages children drink when they're older.

People are born with a preference for sweet tastes, and the early years are an important time for forming life-long flavor and food preferences. Minimizing children's exposure to sweet-tasting foods and drinks early on could be a strategy for helping to shape their taste buds to prefer less sweetness throughout life.

What is the healthiest type of 100% juice?

Juices come in many varieties, and the nutrient content is different for every variety. Some juices may have added vitamins and minerals, such as orange juice with calcium. There isn't any evidence that one type of juice is healthier than another. We need more research to know for sure if there are any particular health benefits from drinking certain varieties of 100% juice.

Where does coconut water fit in the recommendations?

Coconut water is a clear liquid that is tapped from the center of young, green coconuts and technically is a type of 100% juice (if nothing is added to it). Since it is a juice, consumption should be limited to align with the juice recommendations. Coconut water is not equivalent to plain water. Plain water is the best way to quench your child's thirst.

Coconut juice is different than coconut water, and typically has added sugar. Coconut juice is considered a sugar-sweetened beverage and children five and under should avoid it.

Pro-tips: Add water to 100% juice!

- Diluting 100% juice with water is a good way to tone down its sweetness and make a little go a long way.
- Some juice products are a combination of 100% juice and water, pre-mixed for convenience. These products cannot be labeled as 100% juice. While they are a better choice than sugar-sweetened beverages, it's hard to know how much of the final product is 100% juice and how much is water. This can make it hard to know if you're sticking to the recommendation of less than 4-6 ounces per day (depending on your child's age), especially if your child consumes these products frequently. For these reasons, it may be better to buy 100% fruit juice and mix it with water yourself at home. This method may also save money over buying the pre-diluted products.

Thirsty for more?

Visit HealthyDrinksHealthyKids.org to find more information on other drinks such as:

- Water
- Milk
- Plant-Based, Non-Dairy Milk
- Toddler Milk
- Sugar-Sweetened Beverages
- Low-Calorie Sweetened Beverages

Healthy
Eating
Research

These recommendations were developed by experts at the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (AND), the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry (AAPD), and the American Heart Association (AHA) under the leadership of Healthy Eating Research (HER) with funding from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.