

Seven ways to cut calories in beverages

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(HealthDay)—When counting calories, don't forget those in beverages. You might not realize how many you're *drinking*.

For instance, if you have a fancy coffee to start your day, a large soda with lunch and sweet tea with your afternoon snack, you could tally up hundreds of [calories](#) before you factor in your first bite of solid food.

Here are seven ideas for cutting back on these calories to speed [weight loss](#) and give you more leeway for satisfying meals:

- **Number 1:** Make water, plain tea or black coffee your default drink. Even diet sodas aren't good for your health, so avoid them. Instead, add a splash of fruit juice to a glass of sparkling water and top it off with a lemon, lime, cucumber or watermelon slice.
- **Number 2:** For every other beverage, consider its nutritional value before you take a sip. For instance, an 80-calorie glass of nonfat milk delivers protein, calcium and vitamin D, while soda with 80 calories has no nutrients at all.
- **Number 3:** Read every label carefully. It might list calories in an 8-ounce serving, but if the bottle contains 20 ounces and you drink it all, you've consumed two and a half servings.
- **Number 4:** Beware of any beverage that gets most of its calories from sweeteners, including (but not limited to) corn syrup or [high-fructose corn syrup](#), dextrose, fructose, fruit juice concentrate, honey, sucrose, sugar and syrup.
- **Number 5:** For [beverages](#) that you really enjoy, find ways to trim the [calories](#). Choose coffee drinks made with nonfat—not whole—milk, and skip the flavored syrups and whipped cream.
- **Number 6:** If you love smoothies, order the smallest size and choose one made with nonfat yogurt or milk and real fruit—with no added sugar.
- **Number 7:** Finally, use no-calorie beverages, like water, tea and even simple broth instead of a snack, as effective hunger-busters between meals.

More information: The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and

Prevention has a chart detailing just [how many calories you can save](#) every day with simple beverage substitutions.

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