

RETHINK YOUR DRINK

Introduction

This lesson encourages older adults to think about what they drink throughout the day as an important component of their overall health. Staying hydrated, meeting daily calcium requirements or maintaining a healthy digestive system may be challenging for some groups. Others may benefit from a focus on limiting sugar and calorie intake from sweetened beverages.

Preparation

1. Review the topic.

- Start with the key concepts and discussion guide. The discussion guide provides suggested questions to draw out participants' existing knowledge as well as information you can offer in response to each question.
- Consider your participant demographics and potential interests, and conduct any additional research that may be necessary to prepare for specific questions or improve your own understanding of key concepts (see "Program Guide" for suggested resources).

2. Plan your lesson structure.

- Determine whether time and resources allow for a food-based activity or whether you will use an alternate activity. This lesson includes one alternate activity, and additional activity suggestions are available in the "Program Guide."
- See "Exercise for Health" lesson for ways to incorporate physical activity into the lesson, and plan to ask participants to share their favorite ways to exercise.
- Prepare a rough timeline of your lesson and a plan to integrate discussion with the activity. Depending on available time and participant interests, you can integrate discussion topics into an activity or use discussion time to open or close the lesson.

3. Plan how to administer pre-test (as well as post-test if this is the final session). See "Program Guide" for details.

4. Prepare materials.

- Review the appropriate activity and prepare any necessary materials.
- Choose and print handouts, recipes and pre-tests.

Suggested Recipes

Recipes should promote alternatives to drinks with added sugar.

- Watermelon Salad
- Fresh Fruit Spritzer

Suggested Handouts

- "Rethink Your Drink"

Key Concepts

Drinking plenty of liquids is an important part of staying healthy as you age. Even if you don't feel thirsty, you should drink 6-8 glasses of water a day. Other kinds of liquids like lowfat milk and juice can be good choices as well, but watch out for drinks with lots of added sugar.

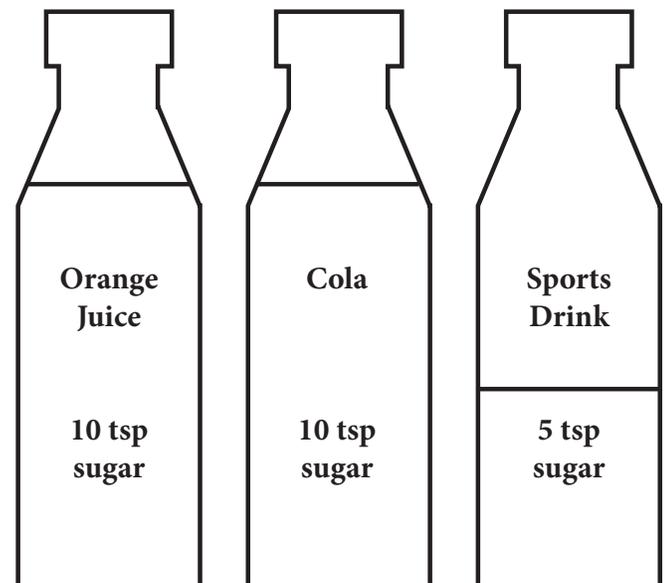
Discussion Guide

Do you think you drink enough water and other liquids throughout the day? Why is it important to drink plenty of water?

- Our bodies are 60 percent water. Water helps regulate our body temperatures and transport nutrients to our cells.
- If you don't drink enough liquids, you can become dehydrated. Feeling thirsty is actually a sign that you are already dehydrated. Other signs of dehydration are feeling lightheaded or dizzy, dry-feeling lips or mouth, and infrequent or dark-colored urine.
- Not drinking enough water can make you think you are hungry when you are really becoming dehydrated.
- Any liquid you drink helps to move fiber through your intestines, cleaning out your system and preventing stomach or digestion problems.

What do you like to drink besides water? What are some drinks to try to avoid?

- Lowfat milk and calcium-fortified milk alternatives or orange juice can help you meet your daily calcium needs.
- One glass of 100% fruit juice counts as a serving of fruit and can provide you with important vitamins, although it can also contain a high amount of sugar (and “cocktails” with less than 100% of any one juice can be even more sugary—check the ingredients list and nutrition facts panel.)
- Watch out for sugar-sweetened beverages. Not only do they add “empty” calories without any other nutrients, but they also often contain added sugars and acids that are particularly unhealthy.
- Sugary drinks provide close to one tenth of the calories in the average American diet, and account for almost half of all added sugars we consume.



What are some strategies for making sure you're drinking plenty of healthy liquids?

- Drink a glass of water when you wake up and before you go to bed.
- Make sure to drink water, milk or juice with each meal.
- Foods contain liquids too: try more soups and fruits like watermelon.
- Drink seltzer or try making your own flavored water with fruit or herbs instead of drinking soda.
- Order or buy unsweetened ice tea instead of sweet tea, or make your own by brewing tea bags in hot water.



Suggested Activities

If you have access to basic ingredients and supplies, we recommend planning the lesson around a cooking demonstration or activity that will show participants concrete skills that apply the lesson concepts. If limited resources or time make a food-based activity impossible, use the alternate activity or any of the other suggested activities in the “Program Guide.”

A. Food-Based Activity: Flavored Water

Instead of spending money on flavored drinks full of added sugars and empty calories, make your own flavored water using fruits and herbs. The longer the pitchers sit in the refrigerator, the stronger the flavor will be, so this activity works best if you can either prepare the water beforehand and pass out samples, or add fruit/herbs at the beginning of the lesson and taste the water at the end.

Discussion points to address while preparing food (see discussion guide as well):

- Do you like to drink tap water? Does anyone ever add anything to their water?
- While waiting for water to be ready, discuss hydration and strategies for choosing healthy drinks.
- While participants are sampling, ask: Which water is the most flavorful? What flavors do you like best? Would you use any of these flavors at home?

Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2 or 3 pitchers with lids• Optional knives and cutting boards• Cups for each participant
Preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Start by deciding whether the activity will be a demonstration or will involve participation. If participants will be prepping food themselves, decide whether they will work alone or in groups.• Review Program Guide for tips on leading a cooking demo or guiding participants through a recipe.• Review ingredients and make substitutions as necessary.• Modify recipe as necessary, and print copies for participants to take home.• Cut fruit and herbs, unless you have space and equipment to let participants do prep work.
Ingredients	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Water to fill pitchers, optional ice• Assorted fruit and herbs to flavor water: oranges, lemons, strawberries, mint, etc.
Directions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• If fruit is not already cut, invite participants to cut thin slices and finely chop herbs.• Add fruit and herbs to separate pitchers of water.• Cover and store water pitchers in a refrigerator for 10-30 minutes.

B. Alternate Activity: Sugar Shock

Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Variety of empty soft, sports and energy drink bottles• Sugar• Tablespoons and teaspoons
Preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Check the amount of sugar in each drink• Consider if/how to divide participants into groups.
Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review how to read food labels—distinguish between serving size and total servings, and highlight where to find total sugars and names for sugars found in the ingredients list.• Ask for volunteers to read the labels, or divide participants into groups and give each group a bottle and measuring spoons.• Have other volunteers or groups measure out the amount of sugar in each bottle (not serving), and then show the group.• Ask for comments and ideas about other beverages that could be substituted for sugary drinks.

Fun Flavored Teas

Instead of spending money on flavored drinks full of added sugars and empty calories, make your own flavored water using fruits and herbs. Add fruit or herbs to cold water and refrigerate for several hours to make a cool drink, or pour hot water over herbs to make a flavored tea.

FLAVORS TO TRY COLD

- Lemon (sliced)
- Lime (sliced)
- Orange (sliced)
- Mint (chopped)
- Strawberry
- Ginger (fresh root; peel and add in 1-inch chunks)
- Cucumber (sliced)
- Watermelon (cubed)
- Berries (crushed)

FLAVORS TO TRY HOT

- Lemon (sliced, or squeezed for juice)
- Lime (sliced, or squeezed for juice)
- Orange (sliced, or squeezed for juice)
- Mint (chopped)
- Ginger (fresh root; peel and add in 1-inch chunks)
- Lavender
- Rose hips
- Chamomile

DIRECTIONS FOR ICED DRINKS

1. Choose one or more ingredients and prepare as indicated.
2. Add ingredients to a large container of water (start with a small amount).
3. Cover container and chill water in the refrigerator for two hours, then taste and add more ingredients if you would like a stronger flavor.
4. Serve immediately or chill for up to 60 minutes more for stronger flavor.

DIRECTIONS FOR HOT DRINKS

1. Choose one or more ingredients and prepare as indicated; for one cup start with only a few slices of fruit, or tablespoons of juice or herbs.
2. Boil water, then pour over ingredients (in a cup).
3. Let steep for 2-5 minutes, then strain out ingredients using a wire strainer or small pot lid held close to the edge of the cup.