

## Rethink Your Drink!

Ever wonder what's in your favorite drink? The answer may surprise you. That soda, sports' drink, yummy flavored coffee/tea drink, energy drink and even that vitamin/mineral/fruit infused water may be loaded with sugar. The average sweetened beverage contains anywhere from 10 - 15 teaspoons of sugar per serving and many bottles contain 2 or more servings. That could mean a whopping 30+ teaspoons of sugar! I don't think many of us would add that much sugar to our coffee, tea or water. And I think most parents would never allow their children to sit down and eat that much sugar but every time we give our children a sugar sweetened beverage that is what is happening.



How much sugar is in your drink?

But you may think – “Well, it’s just a little sugar!” However research shows that that sugar can add up to some big health issues. Americans consume 200 to 300 more calories each day than we did 30 years ago. More calories mean extra weight. One can of soda a day can add up to 10 pounds or more of weight gain in a year. Each day Americans consume 22 teaspoons of sugar — far surpassing the recommended 5 to 9 teaspoons per day. Sweetened beverages are the largest single source of added sugar in the American diet. The average American consumes 50 gallons of soda and other sweetened beverages each year.

All lines of scientific research and evidence indicate a strong link between sugar-sweetened beverage consumption and obesity. Every additional daily serving of soda increases a child’s risk for obesity by 60 %. And young children who drink sugar-sweetened beverages between meals have more than double the risk of overweight compared to those who don’t. Drinking sugar-sweetened beverages also compromises the overall quality of a young child’s diet. But children aren’t the only ones affected; adults who drink a soda or more daily are 27% more likely to be overweight or obese, regardless of income or ethnicity. In addition, adults who drink one to two sugar-sweetened beverages per day have 27% higher risk for developing type 2 diabetes, and 20% higher risk of developing metabolic syndrome and an estimated 100,000 cases of diabetes over the last decade were caused by increased sugar-sweetened beverage consumption. Studies have also revealed that women who drink more than 2 sugar-sweetened beverages per day have a 40% higher risk of heart disease.

Given this new information the UCCE Central Sierra Nutrition Team is encouraging everyone to “Re-Think Your Drink!”

To determine if your beverage of choice is a healthy one read the Nutrition Facts Label. Listed on the label are number of servings per bottle or can and the number of grams of sugar the beverage contains. Divide the number of grams by 4 to determine the amount of sugar in

teaspoons. If there is more than 1 serving per container multiple the number of teaspoons by the number of servings. Then you decide if you want you or your child to have that much sugar.

If you want to limit sugar intake but are not a big fan of plain water try “infused” water. One of our favorites is below. To find out more about sugar sweetened beverage go to the Center for Disease Control website: [http://www.cdc.gov/healthyweight/healthy\\_eating/drinks.html](http://www.cdc.gov/healthyweight/healthy_eating/drinks.html) . If you have any questions or would like additional information about healthy choices call Dorothy Smith, RD Nutrition Family and Consumer Science Advisor with UCCE Central Sierra – 209-754-6476.

### **Watermelon-Rosemary Infused Water**

Makes 2 quarts

- 2 cups watermelon cubes
  - 1 rosemary sprig
1. Add rosemary sprig to your pitcher; press and twist with a wooden spoon handle (enough to bruise leaves and release flavor).
  2. Add 2 cups of watermelon to the pitcher; press and twist with the wooden spoon handle (just enough to release some of the juices).
  3. Fill your pitcher with ice cubes.
  4. Add water to the top of the pitcher.
  5. Cover and enjoy! (Can be refrigerated for up to 3 days).



Mmmm, infused water