

Tips for Families: Drinking Water

Water is very important for everyone's health. Everyone needs to drink plenty of water every day. Start the habit of drinking water early! You can begin to introduce water to infants around six months. Water should not replace breast milk or formula. You should make water available to toddlers and preschoolers all day. Use the tips below to get your family to drink more water.



1 Offer Water Often.

Keep cold water handy and offer water to your child often. You can make it fun by writing down the number of cups that each family member drinks each day or encouraging your child to use a special cup only for water drinking.

2 Limit Other Drinks.

Milk or water is the best drink choice. However, he only needs around two cups of milk total per day. 100 percent fruit juice is fine once or twice a week served in a small half cup glass. Avoid serving soda, fruit drinks, punch, or other sweetened drinks to your child. Sweet drinks can start the process of tooth decay even before he has teeth!

3 Try Natural Flavors.

To help a child get used to drinking water, add fruit. Cut up orange, lemon, or lime slices and add to the water. These may increase a child's interest in water.

4 Protect Teeth.

Fluoride is a mineral in most tap water and protects teeth from decay. Drinking fluoridated water is important to dental health. Check your local community water service to see if there is fluoride in your water. If there is not fluoride in your water, consult your healthcare provider for guidance.

5 Use Tap Water.

Bottled water can be helpful when families are on the go, but bottled water does not always have fluoride. Check the label. Bottled water is not any safer than tap water. Tap water is cheaper!

6 Don't Buy Other Drinks!

If you only have milk or water available, your child will have to drink milk or water. Your child cannot beg for a drink that is not in the house! It is healthier for you, too!

7 Make it Fun.

Use fun straws only when your child drinks water. Get a special cup that is used only for drinking water. After a long play session, bring water to your child and call it a superhero drink.



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