

For children aged 5-11

# Healthy Hydration

About  
6-8  
drinks  
a day

This guide is intended to help parents, teachers and carers choose a balance of drinks for children aged 5-11 years.

## Water

Drink plenty



Is a good choice throughout the day because it hydrates without providing extra energy (calories/kilojoules) or harming teeth.

## Milk

Have regularly



Is a useful source of nutrients, especially protein, B vitamins, iodine and calcium. Most children can have lower-fat milks such as skimmed, 1% or semi-skimmed. Unsweetened, calcium-fortified dairy alternatives can also be included. Milky drinks containing added sugars such as milkshakes, hot chocolate and malted drinks should be limited.

## Fruit and vegetable juices and smoothies

Can have once a day



Can provide some vitamins and minerals. However, they also contain sugars and can be acidic which is harmful to teeth so it's recommended to limit them to one small glass (150ml) a day and keep them to mealtimes. 150ml counts as a maximum 1 portion of your 5 A DAY. They can be diluted with water to reduce the acidity and sugars content.

## Sugar-free drinks

Occasionally



Hydrate without adding extra sugars but it's a good idea for most drinks to be milk or water. Fizzy drinks may contain acids that can be harmful to teeth. Be aware that some of these drinks contain caffeine.

## Tea and coffee

Occasionally  
(and in small amounts  
if caffeinated)



Caffeine is naturally present in tea and coffee. Small amounts are harmless but high intakes should be avoided, especially for young children. It's best for children to drink decaffeinated tea and coffee with reduced-fat milks and no added sugars.

## Sugary drinks

Avoid



Are best avoided as they provide sugars, but few other nutrients. Fizzy drinks may contain acids that can also be harmful to teeth and some soft drinks contain caffeine.

## Sports and energy drinks

Not suitable  
for children



Can be high in sugars and energy drinks may contain high levels of caffeine or other stimulants. These drinks are not suitable for young children.

The amount of fluid a child needs depends on many factors but generally they should aim to drink about 6-8 glasses of fluid a day, using smaller glasses (150-200ml) for younger children.

This is based on recommendations on fluid intakes for children from the European Food Safety Authority.