



Think Your Drink During March, National Nutrition Month



Have you checked the Nutrition Facts label on your favorite beverages? Calories from beverages can add up quickly. Unlike food, beverages usually don't make people feel "full." Swapping a can of sweetened soda pop with water every day can trim about 150 calories from your daily diet. That simple swap could add up to a 15-pound weight loss during the course of a year.

Know Your Sweeteners

Many types of sweeteners are used in beverages, and most add calories without vitamins or minerals. Sugar-free food additives, such as aspartame, are used in diet soda. While they have zero or few calories, they also contribute no nutrition.

Read the "Ingredient Statement" on the label to see what you are consuming. Added sweeteners have many different names, including:

- High-fructose corn syrup
- Fructose
- Fruit juice concentrate
- Honey
- Sugar
- Syrup
- Corn syrup
- Sucrose
- Dextrose

How Many Calories Did You Drink?

Let's say you drank a 20-ounce bottle of a nondiet cola beverage. How many calories did you consume?

1. Check out the Nutrition Facts label, which lists servings per container and the amount of calories and other nutrients per serving.

Servings per container: 2.5
Calories per serving: 100

2. Multiply the number of servings by the number of calories per serving (100 x 2.5).
3. You had 250 calories, all from added sweeteners.

Nutrition Facts		
Serving Size: 8 fl. oz (240 mL)		
Servings Per Container: 2.5		
Amount Per Serving		
Calories	100	
		% Daily Value
Total Fat	0g	0%
Sodium	35mg	2%
Total Carbohydrate	27g	9%
Sugars	27g	
Protein	0g	

Make Healthful Beverage Choices

- Choose water or low-calorie beverages when you are thirsty. Save money by bringing a refillable water bottle. Be sure to wash it thoroughly before and after use.
- Get your calcium. Have 3 cups of fat-free milk or other calcium-rich beverages or foods, including yogurt. Make a fruit smoothie by blending yogurt and frozen strawberries.
- Choose 100 percent fruit or vegetable juice instead of "fruit-flavored" beverages. Better yet, have whole fruit, which is more than 90 percent water.
- When you want a sweetened beverage, including smoothies, coffee drinks and soda pop, order the smallest size. Have coffee drinks made with fat-free milk, and skip the whipped topping.

Reference: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. www.cdc.gov/healthyweight/healthy_eating/drinks.html

This program is funded in part by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. SNAP provides nutrition assistance to people with low income. It can help you buy nutritious foods for a better diet. To find out more contact your county Social Services office or call 1-800-755-2716.

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Here's an old favorite with a twist. The vegetables add fiber, and vitamins A and C. Boost nutrition by adding extra vegetables to casseroles, soups and other foods.

Sloppy Garden Joes

- 1 medium yellow onion, chopped
- 1 carrot, chopped or shredded
- 1 green pepper, chopped
- 1 pound ground turkey
- 1 (8-ounce) can tomato sauce, low-sodium
- 1 (15-ounce) can crushed tomatoes
- 1 (8-ounce) can mushroom stems and pieces, drained
- ¼ c. barbecue sauce
- 6 whole-wheat buns



1. Rinse and prepare vegetables as indicated. Sauté onions, carrots, green pepper and turkey in a pan over medium-high heat for five minutes.
2. Add tomato sauce, crushed tomatoes, mushrooms and barbecue sauce. Bring to a boil.
3. Cover pan, reduce heat and simmer for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally.
4. Uncover pan and cook for about three minutes or until thickened.
5. Serve on toasted or untoasted whole-wheat buns.
6. Refrigerate leftovers within two hours.

Makes six servings. Each serving has 280 calories, 9 grams (g) fat, 36 g carbohydrate, 16 g protein, 6 g fiber and 580 milligrams sodium. A serving also provides 70 percent of the daily recommendation for vitamin A and 60 percent of the daily recommendation for vitamin C.

When I was at my friend's house, I noticed she was thawing meat in a pan on her countertop. Is that safe?

No. Room-temperature thawing is not safe. Never leave ground beef or any perishable food out at room temperature for more than two hours.

The safest place to thaw meat is in the refrigerator. Keeping meat cold while it is thawing helps prevent the growth of harmful bacteria. Be sure to cook it or refreeze within one or two days.

To defrost ground beef more rapidly, you can defrost it in the microwave oven or in cold water. If using the microwave, cook the ground beef immediately because some areas may begin to cook during the defrosting. To defrost in cold water, put the meat in a watertight plastic bag and submerge. Change the water every 30 minutes. Cook immediately. Do not refreeze raw ground meat thawed in cold water or in the microwave oven unless you cook it first.

FoodWi\$e Tip of the Month

When browning ground meat, brown several pounds and drain. Divide evenly in freezer bags or freezer containers.

Then label with the date and contents, and freeze. Thaw in the refrigerator or microwave for quick meals such as tacos, chili and casseroles.

Linda Kuster, Grand Forks County



Julie Garden-Robinson, Food and Nutrition Specialist

Menu Idea

Sloppy Garden Joes
Sliced apples and bananas
Fat-free or low-fat milk



Just for Fun

Why did the person stare at the can of frozen orange juice?
Because it said "concentrate."

Contact the local office of the
NDSU Extension Service
for more information
on food and nutrition or
managing your food dollar.

