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MCHD HEALTH BLOG

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Public Health
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MORGAN COUNTY HEALTH DEPT.



RETHINKING WHAT YOU DRINK

With the days getting warmer and longer, it's hard to resist an ice-cold soft drink or sweet tea after a long day or while relaxing outside. But did you know that sugary drinks are often loaded with unhealthy ingredients, and are the leading source of added sugars in the American diet? Next time you go to the grocery store and get sugary drinks, whether it's regular pop, fruit drinks, sport/energy drinks, flavored coffees, or sweetened water, make sure you take a peek at the nutrition label. They often contain many calories, added sugars, and saturated fat. In fact, one 12-oz can of pop can have as many as 10 teaspoons of added sugar!

Watching what you drink is just as important as what you eat. In fact, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) says that "people who often drink sugary drinks are more likely to face health problems, such as weight gain, obesity, type 2 diabetes, heart disease, kidney diseases, non-alcoholic liver disease, cavities, and gout, a type of arthritis." Thankfully, you have options to rethink what you drink. Here are some tips from the CDC to enjoying healthier, low-calorie drinks for you and your family:

- Choose water! Whether unsweetened, bottled, or sparkling, your body will thank you. Need more flavor? Add fruit like berries or slices of lime, lemon, or cucumber.
- If you are missing the fizzy-ness of pop, add a splash of 100% juice to plain sparkling water.
- Resist the temptation to stock up on sugary drinks and instead keep cold bottles or jugs of water in the fridge.
- If water still isn't scratching that itch, reach for drinks that have low-fat or fat-free milk, unsweetened and fortified milk alternatives, or 100% fruit or vegetable juice.
- When you're at the coffee shop, request your drink with low-fat or fat-free milk, without flavored syrups, and/or without whipped cream. Try going back to the basics with black coffee!
- Find a reusable water bottle you love and use it/refill it throughout the day.

Remember that you can also be a role model for your friends and family by choosing water and other healthy, low-calorie beverages!

MCHD encourages you to seek out good-for-you drink options as you pursue a healthy and active lifestyle. If you would like to learn more about how to rethink your drink, visit https://www.cdc.gov/healthyweight/healthy_eating/drinks.html.