

Better Beverage

Shopping Checklist

Finding drinks that are good, and good for them.

You have a dilemma. Your child's pediatrician wants you to skip sugary drinks and instead buy something better. But with all the "good for you" beverages in stores, it's hard to know what "better" really is.

Enter the Better Beverage Shopping Checklist — tips for helping you choose drinks that taste good (and are good) for your kids. Bring this on your next grocery trip and you might just bring home a few better beverages.

Check the ingredients for added sugar.

Grams of sugar listed in the Nutrition Facts can be deceiving — they don't distinguish naturally-occurring sugar (such as that found in 100% fruit juice or milk) from added sugar. To avoid it, check the ingredients for anything that sounds sweet — everything from plain sugar and syrups to maltodextrin and sucrose.

No sweeteners either.

Don't be fooled by "zero calorie" or "naturally sweetened" drinks that use Aspartame, Sucralose, Saccharine, Acesulfame potassium, Neotame, or Stevia. These sweeteners contain no nutritional value and should never be given to children under 13.

No Caffeine

Kids shouldn't have caffeine, period. And besides, do they really need that extra burst of energy?

100% juice, in moderation.

Make sure any juice you buy is 100% fruit or vegetable juice. Note that these "good for you" drinks still contain calories, so give your child no more than a 4 oz. serving a day, of 60 calories or less. Stretch this serving throughout the day by watering down the juice (for example, mix 2 oz. water + 2 oz. juice).

Tip: Be sure to check the number of "servings" in the entire can or bottle. Multiply the amount of sugar by the number of servings to see what you're really sipping.

Want flavor? Look for naturally-flavored still or sparkling water.

These are zero calorie drinks made with herbs (such as mint or ginger) or essence oils (such as orange or lemon oilphase) to add flavor without the sugar.

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KIDS
MARYLAND

Dozens of choices
a mom can love.

SugarFreeKidsMD.org