



## **RETHINK YOUR DRINK— AND CUT BACK ON SUGAR**

### **Support and Promote the *Michigan Nutrition Standards***

For adults and children, the evidence is strong that cutting back on sugary drinks like soda, juice drinks and some sports drinks—or eliminating them altogether—may help with weight control and may lower the risk of diabetes. Some sugary drinks contain up to 500 calories per container which is about 25% of the calories some students need in an entire day. That’s a lot of calories!

In the past several years many Michigan schools have made great strides toward eliminating or limiting the sale of sugary drinks during the school day and at school-related functions. There are strict guidelines about where soda machines can be placed in a school building and what time of day soda and other foods in direct competition with school meals can be sold. Still, there are gaps.

The *Michigan Nutrition Standards* address those gaps with guidelines for beverages sold or offered as part of school meals, during mealtime, in school vending machines, and at school-related functions.

With all the pretty packaging and confusing health claims, it’s not always easy to figure out whether a drink is healthy or not. Following are the *Michigan Nutrition Standards* recommendations and some helpful hints for choosing healthy beverages outside of school.





## WHAT THE STANDARDS SAY:

The *Michigan Nutrition Standards* include recommendations for beverages served and sold at school and at school-related functions. Below are those standards.

USDA SCHOOL BREAKFAST PROGRAM	USDA SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM	USDA AFTER SCHOOL SNACK PROGRAM	BEVERAGES IN OTHER PLACES
<p><b>MILK</b>—Not to exceed 1% milk fat for all milk offered, not to exceed 28 grams of sugar per 8 oz serving (includes plain and flavored milk).</p> <p><b>JUICE</b>—At least half of fruit offerings must be from whole fruit, rather than 100% juice</p>	<p><b>MILK</b>—Not to exceed 1% milk fat for all milk offered, not to exceed 28 grams of sugar per 8 oz serving (includes plain and flavored milk).</p> <p><b>JUICE</b>—100% juice may be only offered once per week as the fruit choice and in a 4 oz serving</p>	<p><b>MILK</b>—Not to exceed 1% milk fat for all milk offered, not to exceed 28 grams of sugar per 8 oz serving (includes plain and flavored milk).</p> <p><b>JUICE</b>—At least half of fruit offerings must be from whole fruit, rather than 100% juice.</p>	<p>* <b>WATER</b></p> <p>* <b>MILK</b>—varies by grade level</p> <p>* <b>SPORTS DRINKS</b>—should not be available in the school setting</p> <p>* <b>OTHER BEVERAGES</b>—not allowed at elementary and middle school.</p> <p>* See <a href="#">standards</a> for specific recommendations</p>

## CHOOSING HEALTHY DRINKS

If a school follows the *Michigan Nutrition Standards* they are offering healthy drinks. If you purchase and consume drinks outside of school these suggestions can help you make healthier choices.

### 1. Check out the Calories in a **SERVING**.

NUTRITION FACTS LABEL
Serving Size: 8 fl oz.
Servings Per Container: 2.5
Amount Per Serving:
Calories: 100

The Nutrition Facts Label on all beverage containers may give the calories for only part of the container. The example below shows the label on a 20-oz. bottle. It lists the number of calories in an 8-oz. serving (100) even though the bottle contains 20 oz. or 2.5 servings. To figure out how many calories are in the whole bottle, you need to

multiply the number of calories in one serving by the number of servings in the bottle (100 x 2.5). You can see that if you drink the whole bottle—which most people do—you will consume 250 calories even though what the label calls a “serving” only contains 100. Look closely at the serving size on the Nutrition Facts Label when comparing calories of different drinks. Many fountain sodas, when purchased in 32-ounce containers, contain almost 500 calories per container!



### ADDED SUGAR

Agave nectar	Dextrose	Lactose
Brown sugar	Evaporated cane juice	Maltose
Cane crystals	Glucose	Malt syrup
Cane sugar	High-fructose corn syrup	Molasses
Corn sweetener	Honey	Raw sugar
Corn syrup	Invert sugar	Sucrose
Crystalline fructose		Sugar
		Syrup

**2. Check for Added Sugar.** Read the ingredient list to check for added sugar. Ingredients are listed in order by weight. When something is listed first, second, or third, you know that this drink probably contains a lot of it. Check ingredient lists to see where sugar appears. Limit drinks that mention sugar in the first few ingredients or drinks that have lots of different kinds of sugar sprinkled throughout the list. That means it's a very sugary drink. Sugar has different names, so check the list (right) for these words that also mean sugar.

- **WHY ARE JUICE AND MILK HIGH IN SUGAR?** Sugar exists naturally in some drinks such as 100% juice or milk. It's not added sugar, it's there naturally. Milk contains lactose, a milk sugar; and juice contains fructose, a fruit sugar. These sugars are NOT added sugar. A typical 8 oz carton of 1% low-fat chocolate milk contains 22 grams of sugar. 12 of those grams occur naturally in the milk. 10 grams of sugar (about 2.5 teaspoons) are added to improve taste.
- **ARE MILK AND 100% JUICE HEALTHY DRINKS?** Both milk and 100% juice are healthy drinks. Low-fat milk is a healthy choice because it contains fewer calories and less fat than whole or 2% milk and it contains the same bone-building nutrients such as calcium, Vitamin D, and protein. School-age children (4-18) need to consume 2-4 servings of low-fat dairy foods every day and drinking low-fat white or flavored milk is a good way to meet the requirements. Flavored low-fat milk does have some added sugar but it's not nearly as much as soda and other sugary drinks. The nutritional benefits of drinking low-fat flavored milk far outweigh the little bit of added sugar they contain. In addition, current research shows that the sugar added to flavored milk only contributes to <3% of added sugar in children's diets. 100% juice can be good for you too in small servings. The calories in juice add up quickly because juice doesn't fill you up like whole fruit does. It's best to drink 100% juice every now and then in small amounts and to eat more whole fruit.

### ENCOURAGE HEALTHY DRINKS

Both children and adults benefit by choosing low-calorie, nutritious beverages. You can make healthy the easy choice when you....

- Choose water instead of sugar-sweetened beverages.
- Choose low-fat and fat-free milk (unflavored or flavored).
- Choose 100% juice in small servings, not "juice drinks".
- Carry a water bottle and refill it throughout the day. Serve or drink low-fat or fat-free milk or water with meals.
- Don't "stock the fridge" with sugar-sweetened beverages.
- Add a splash of 100% juice to plain sparkling water for a refreshing, low-calorie drink.
- When you do opt for a sugar-sweetened beverage, go for the small size. Some companies are now selling 8-oz. cans and bottles of soda, which contain about 100 calories.
- Be a role model for your friends and family by choosing healthy, low-calorie beverages.