



# YOUTH

# HEALTH BULLETIN



DECEMBER 2022

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## THIS MONTH'S TOPIC: CAFFEINE



**Y**ou might know about foods or drinks that people say give them more energy or help them feel more awake. These foods and drinks have a chemical called caffeine. Caffeine is a stimulant. Stimulants make us feel more awake and alert. Many people have drinks with caffeine in them because they think it helps them to wake up and feel sharper.

While caffeine comes from plants, it is not always safe. It can hurt you if you eat or drink too much. Too much caffeine can make you feel shaky, have an upset stomach, headaches, make it hard to concentrate, and even cause trouble sleeping.

Both children and adults should limit the amount of caffeine that they eat and drink daily. You can do this by choosing not to drink or eat things that have lots of

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## Too much caffeine can make you feel shaky, have an upset stomach, headaches, and even cause trouble sleeping.

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caffeine. These types of drinks (and some food) have large amounts of caffeine in them:

- Energy drinks
- Sodas and cola
- Sports drinks
- Coffee
- Tea
- Chocolate

Energy drinks make the top of the list because they have the most caffeine and the most sugar of any of the items. This makes energy drinks dangerous to kids and adults. They contain lots of the things our bodies do not need, and very little that our bodies do need to feel good and do our best.

In fact, there is no nutritional value in caffeine at all! This means that your body does not need any caffeine to work its best and grow to its full potential. In fact, some studies show that children who eat or drink a lot of caffeine do not grow as tall or as strong as they could have otherwise.

Instead, choose drinks and snacks that have what your body needs to grow! Water and milk are great drink choices to make every day. Your body needs water to feel its best, and low-fat milk has calcium



and vitamins to strengthen your bones. You can add fruits or other natural flavors to water to mix it up from time to time. Or drink seltzer water if you really want a drink with fizz. Try adding one of these delicious flavor boosters to your water or mix and match to create your own unique combination!

- Strawberry slices
- Orange slices or wedges
- Cucumber slices
- Lemon or lime wedges
- Mint leaves
- Watermelon cubes

#### REFERENCES:

<https://www.childrens.com/health-wellness/caffeine-for-kids>

#### ADULT HEALTH BULLETIN

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