

LIQUID CALORIES COUNT



The average American gets about 21% of their calories from liquid!
Since the 1970's, the per capita intake of soft drinks and fruit juices has gone up along with portion size of these beverages.

So if we drink these liquids, will we eat less food?

NO!

The human body was built to have separate mechanisms for thirst and hunger. So hunger is not satisfied by high calorie drinks.

Water is essential for many body functions and it does quench thirst. Water and foods that are high in water (like fruits and vegetables) will tend to make us feel fuller because they take up volume in our stomachs. Water also plays an important part in the metabolism of stored fat and the maintenance of muscle tone. It seems then that water stands alone in its ability to both quench thirst and make us feel full without adding the extra calories of other drinks.

Did you know that a 20-ounce soft drink is actually 2 ½ servings? That makes 250 calories instead of the 100 calories listed on the label for an 8-ounce serving.

Fruit juices also come in bottles that are much larger than the single serving size of 6-8ounces. They have some vitamins and minerals but because they are processed, they lack the fiber found in a serving of fruit. Juice is considered just as calorie dense as most soft drinks.

While coffee has no calories by itself, a large coffee or latte drink with flavoring, and cream additions can hold up to 700 calories (mostly from sugar). The same goes for tea. Tea drinks (like chai) may have significant added calories depending on ingredients.

Alcoholic beverages can rack up calories too especially the mixed and blended varieties. A five ounce glass of wine offers about 130 calories and a twelve ounce glass of regular beer weighs in at 160 calories. If you order a margarita, with tequila, sweet or sour mix and triple sec, be prepared to swallow about 60-65 calories per ounce or around 500 calories in an 8 ounce drink.

While sports drinks are being promoted by the industry, keep in mind that the average person does not need them to stay hydrated. Unless you are sweating very heavily or running a marathon, you can do well with just water. The endurance athlete needs the sugar and electrolytes but generally the average healthy person doing moderate exercise does not.

So if you want a soft drink, is a DIET drink the best choice? They do contain FDA approved sweeteners but researchers are concerned that DIET drinks condition people to prefer sweets. Another concern is that the acidity of soft drinks in general is hard on tooth enamel at any age.

So choose your beverages wisely----and let water work for you if optimum health and/or weight loss are your goals.

