

Nutrition Times

Prepared monthly by South Zone dietitians, Nutrition Services

Be Mindful of Holiday Drinks

Staying healthy during the holiday season can be hard. If you're trying not to overindulge while still enjoying the holiday spirit, don't forget to be mindful of the festive drinks. The calories from both alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks can add up quickly. The ideas below will help you to stick to your commitment to be healthy and still enjoy parties and celebrations.

Limit high calorie drinks

To lower calories, alternate sweet or alcoholic drinks with lower calorie options. Try:

- sparkling water or diet pop
- vegetable or tomato juice
- cranberry juice with club soda
- sparkling white wine, diet gingerale, and lime juice



Love eggnog? Enjoy a small cup of this seasonal treat and think of it as dessert.

Choose healthier drink options

Milk is a healthy choice that can be used for festive drinks. To a cup of steamed milk or a plant-based beverage such as soy, almond or coconut add:

- Chai or Earl Grey tea and 1 - 2 teaspoons (5 - 10 mL) sugar or sweetener
- 1 Tbsp (15 mL) of cocoa powder, 1-2 tsp (5-10 mL) of sugar or sweetener, a pinch of cinnamon, and ¼ tsp (1 mL) vanilla **or** 1 drop of peppermint extract

Variations: Peppermint Mocha: substitute strong coffee for half of the milk and use 1 drop of peppermint extract instead of vanilla

Spiced mocha: substitute strong coffee for half of the milk and use nutmeg instead of vanilla

Gingerbread latte: substitute strong coffee for half of the milk, use molasses instead of sugar, and add 1/8 tsp (0.5mL) ground ginger and a pinch of cinnamon

For a cold drink idea:

- 4 oz (125 mL) tomato or vegetable juice with dashes of lemon juice and Worcestershire sauce and a couple drops of Tabasco. (Add extra celery garnish to munch on 😊)

Enjoy alcoholic drinks in moderation

It's not just the calories in drinks you need to think about. Alcohol can also affect your heart rate and blood pressure as well as your mood and behavior. The effects will vary from one person to another. To stay healthy, set limits for yourself and stick to them:

- Have no more than 2 drinks in any 3 hours.
- For every drink of alcohol, have one non-alcoholic drink.
- Eat before and while you are drinking. Food slows down the absorption of alcohol.



Upcoming Classes

There is a fee to attend the whole baby series, the nutrition class is **free. All Nutrition classes are **Free**.*

Brooks:

Infant Nutrition: Tuesday, December 12.
7:00 – 8:30p.m. Call 403-501-3315 or visit ahsbrooksnutrition.eventbrite.ca to register.

Prenatal Nutrition: Tuesday, December 5.
7:00 – 9:00 p.m. Call 403-501-3315 or visit ahsbrooksnutrition.eventbrite.ca to register.

Alberta Healthy Living Program Classes: Ongoing.
Register: 403-793-6659.

Medicine Hat:

Nutrition and Healthy Eating During Pregnancy:
January 8, 7-9 p.m. Register: 403-502-8215. Not just for first-time moms; find out what's new!

***Baby Steps Infant Nutrition:** Dec 4, 2:30-4:00 p.m. at Community Health Services, 2948 Dunmore Rd SE. 403-502-8215 or ahsmhnutrition.eventbrite.com

Mealtime Struggles: Feb 5, 7-8:30 p.m. Learn strategies for dealing with picky eaters. Register through Medicine Hat Public Library, 403-502-8525 or ahsmhnutrition.eventbrite.com.

Alberta Healthy Living Program Classes: Ongoing.
Register: 403-529-8969.

Lethbridge:

Baby Steps Infant Nutrition: Ongoing. Register: 403-388-6668.

Alberta Healthy Living Program Classes: (Diabetes, Heart CHEC, Stroke Sense, Getting Started, Reducing Risk – Ongoing). Register: 403-388-6654.

Contact

If you have questions about information in this article, contact your local Registered Dietitian at Community Health Services:

**801 1st Avenue South
Lethbridge, AB
T1J 4L5** **403.388.6666**

**2948 Dunmore Road SE
Medicine Hat, AB
T1A 8E3** **403.502.8200**

**440 3rd Street East
Brooks, AB
T1R 1B3** **403.501.3300**

Canada's low-risk alcohol guidelines recommend:

- Women: no more than 2 drinks per day (maximum 10 drinks per week)
- Men: no more than 3 drinks per day (maximum 15 drinks per week)
- At least 2 non-drinking days each week to prevent it from becoming a habit.

<http://www.ccsa.ca/Resource%20Library/2012-Canada-Low-Risk-Alcohol-Drinking-Guidelines-Brochure-en.pdf>

A standard drink is:

- 341 mL of 5% alcohol beer, cider or cooler
- 142 mL (5 oz) wine
- 43 mL (1½ oz) distilled alcohol (gin, rum, rye, etc)



Enjoy your holiday season and the moments spent with friends and family. But keep yourself and others safe and healthy by following the tips above. If you are hosting a party, make sure there are plenty of non-alcoholic and healthier drink options available.

Happy Holidays!

