Sugary Drinks and Your Health

- Most drinks contain two kinds of sugar; natural sugar (e.g. lactose in milk and fruit in fruit juice) and added sugar. Many processed foods, like sweets and sodas, have added sugars.

- Sugary drinks are drinks that are sweetened with added sugars. Sugary drinks add more calories to your diet but not many nutrients.

- Too much added sugar can lead to tooth decay and weight gain. Being overweight can lead to chronic diseases such as type 2 diabetes, certain cancers, and heart disease. Sugary drinks may also have caffeine which can cause problems with sleep or changes to your mood.

Action Steps:

- Drink water instead of sugary drinks like sodas, coffee drinks (e.g. caramel macchiato or frappuccino) sports drinks, energy drinks, and juice drinks.

- Choose healthy drinks, such as water, 1% milk, fat-free milk, 100% fruit juice, or unsweetened tea instead of sugary drinks.

The Nutrition Facts Label and Ingredient Lists

- When learning about health information, it is important to consider where the information comes from. Consider who provided the information, why the information was provided, and when the information was provided.

- Reading the Nutrition Facts labels and Ingredient Lists on food and drink packaging can help you find out how much sugar is in a food or drink.

- Names for added sugars include: corn syrup, corn syrup solids, dextrose, fructose, high-fructose corn syrup (HFCS), honey, malt syrup, maltose, maple syrup, molasses, nectars (e.g., peach nectar, pear nectar), raw sugar, sucrose, and sugar.

Action Steps:

- Read the Nutrition Facts label to choose foods and beverages with less total sugars.

- Read the Ingredient List to choose foods and beverages with little or no added sugars.
Internal and External Influences on Health

- Understanding internal and external influences is an important skill that will help you make healthier choices about food and drinks.
  - **Internal influences**: knowledge, interests, likes, dislikes, desires (e.g., feel accepted), and curiosity.
  - **External influences**: media and advertising, setting, location, culture, parents, family, peers, friends, and role models.

Action Step:
- Identify the internal and external influences that impact your food and drink choices. Then, decide what you can do to make healthier choices.

Decision-Making

- The decision-making process is an important skill to develop and to practice in order to make healthier choices.
  - Steps in the decision-making process include:
    a. State the situation
    b. List the options
    c. Weigh the possible consequences and benefits
    d. Consider values
    e. Make a decision and act
    f. Evaluate the decision

Action Step:
- Use the *Choose a Healthy Drink Challenge* worksheet to practice decision-making.

For CalFresh information, call 1-877-847-3663. Funded by USDA SNAP, an equal opportunity provider and employer. Visit [www.cachampionsforchange.net](http://www.cachampionsforchange.net) for healthy tips.