

Topline on Tea

News from the Tea Council of the U.S.A.

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RESEARCH UPDATE

Tea is One of Top Sips According to New Healthy Beverage Recommendations

Nutrition isn't just about what you eat -- it's about what you drink. In the March issue of the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* a panel of leading nutrition, obesity and hydration experts released the first-ever guidelines on what and how much consumers should drink as part of a healthy diet. This advice may help curb the excess calories that are consumed from liquid beverages in the U.S. diet.

Currently, it is estimated that Americans consume over 20 percent of total calories or over 400 calories per day are from liquid sources. The majority of these calories represent nutrient-poor, calorie-rich choices. Some research studies suggest that the calories consumed through beverages are not as filling or satiating as the same number of calories from solids, another factor contributing to over consumption of calories, and potential weight gain.

The panel ranked beverages according to their nutrient density or nutrients per calorie, and based on the scientific evidence suggesting that the beverage provides a health benefit or a health risk, such as potentially reducing the risk of certain diseases or contributing to obesity. Water was the top-ranked followed closely by unsweetened tea or coffee. Sweetened beverages such as soda or fruit punch were ranked lowest. Here is their ranking, in order of healthiest to least healthy beverage. The guidance is based on a 2,200 calorie per day diet.

- Level I: Water (20-50 ounces)
- Level II: Unsweetened coffee and tea (0-40 ounces)
- Level III: Nonfat or low-fat milk and fortified soy beverages (0-16 ounces)
- Level IV: Calorie-free sweetened beverages (0-32 ounces)
- Level V: 100% fruit and vegetable juices, whole milk, sports drinks (0-8 ounces)
- Level VI: Calorically sweetened beverages with virtually no nutrients such as soda and fruit punch (0-8 ounces)

Tea Offers Potential Health Benefits: Reports Panel

According to the panel, black, green and oolong tea provide a variety of flavonoid antioxidants and other micronutrients. The panel reported that some studies show that daily consumption of three or more servings of tea may reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease. Tea has been linked to other potential health benefits such as increased bone density, reduced tooth decay and cavities and reduced kidney stones.

Based on tea's potential contributions to health, and its position as a non-caloric beverage, the group recommends consuming up to 40 ounces, or five 8-ounce servings, of unsweetened tea per day. They note however, that adding milk, cream, sugar or other sweeteners to tea add calories to the beverage and should be factored in when calculating the amount to be consumed.

Although research shows that all beverages help hydrate, regardless of caffeine content, the panel points out that it is still prudent to moderate caffeine because too much may lead to increased anxiousness and changes in mood. The panel recommends limiting caffeine intake to 400 milligrams per day. A serving of tea provides about 50 milligrams of caffeine so several servings of tea can be enjoyed each day without exceeding the panel's caffeine limit.

Beverage Panel

The Healthy Beverage Guidelines were created by a panel of experts in the fields of nutrition, epidemiology, obesity, hydration and phytochemicals from several leading institutions, including Harvard School of Public Health, Johns Hopkins, the University of North Carolina, Louisiana State University, University of Connecticut, and Oregon State University and were funded by an unrestricted grant from the Unilever Health Institute. The expert panel was fully independent. The Unilever Health Institute, Lipton[®] and Unilever had no power to influence or veto decisions.

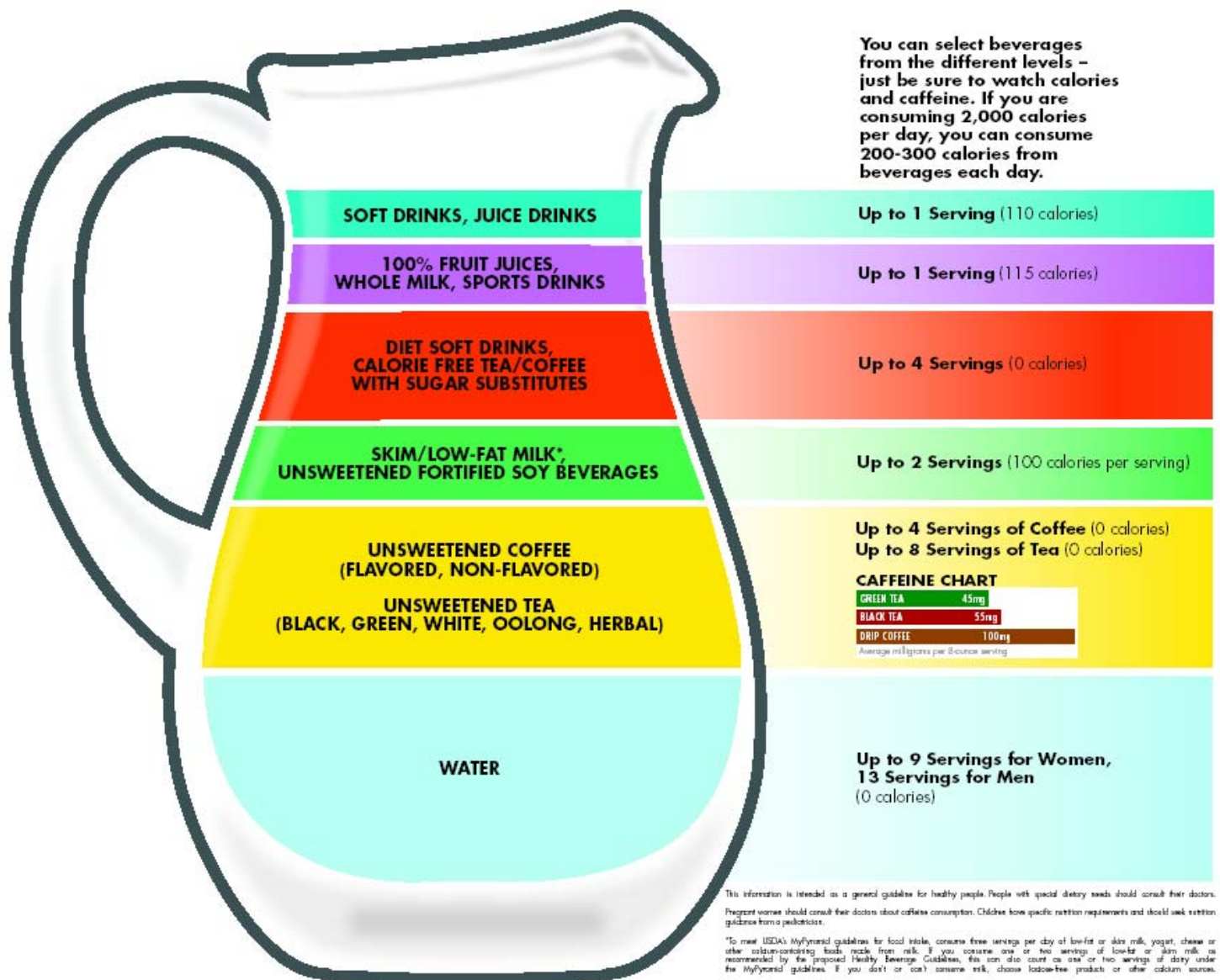
Reference: Popkin BM, et al. A new proposed guidance system for beverage consumption in the United States. *Am J Clin Nutr* 2006: 83

See graphic below

THE DAILY HEALTHY BEVERAGE GUIDELINES

Proposed by a panel of nutritional experts YOU ARE WHAT YOU DRINK

The proposed Healthy Beverage Guidelines were created by a panel of nutrition experts to help Americans make smart beverage choices. According to these proposed Guidelines, women should drink 9 eight-ounce servings of beverages each day and men should drink 13. To make the most of your daily beverage allotment, choose beverages from the different levels in the pitcher. Remember that beverages should not make up more than 10-15 percent of your total daily calories and that you should limit caffeine consumption to 400 milligrams per day. Contrary to popular belief, studies prove that caffeine consumption in moderation is NOT dehydrating. Based on the proposed Guidelines, you should choose most of your beverages from the bottom levels of the pitcher and consume the beverages in the upper levels in moderation. Each beverage is ranked from bottom to top by its average calories, nutrient content and potential health benefits.



This information is intended as a general guideline for healthy people. People with special dietary needs should consult their doctors. Pregnant women should consult their doctors about caffeine consumption. Children have specific nutrition requirements and should seek nutrition guidance from a pediatrician.

*To meet USDA's MyPyramid guidelines for food intake, consume three servings per day of low-fat or skim milk, yogurt, cheese or other calcium-containing foods made from milk. If you consume one or two servings of low-fat or skim milk as recommended by the proposed Healthy Beverage Guidelines, this can also count as one or two servings of dairy under the MyPyramid guidelines. If you don't or can't consume milk, choose lactose-free products or other calcium sources.

Those who choose to drink alcoholic beverages should do so sensibly and in moderation: up to one drink per day for women and up to two drinks per day for men.

For the panel's complete recommendations on beverage consumption, see the March 2006 issue of the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition. The panel was funded through an unrestricted grant from the Unilever Health Institute North America. The Unilever Health Institute, Lipton and Unilever had no power to influence or veto the panel's decisions.

This poster is provided courtesy of LIFTECH™ TEA.

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