Tips for Teens

Added Sugar in Beverages

Intended Audience:

- Teens

Objectives

- Identify sources of sugar sweetened beverages.
- Understand the health impact of excess sugar sweetened beverage consumption.
- Identify healthier beverage options.
- Create SMART goals to decrease intake of sugar sweetened beverages.

Time

- 30 minutes

Supplies

- PowerPoint Slides

Do Ahead

- Review lesson.
- Gather Supplies.

Sources

- The American Heart Association
- 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans
- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics

BACKGROUND

The 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans highlight the importance of limiting intake of added sugars by minimizing consumption of sugar sweetened beverages (SSB). This is especially important among the adolescent population as the 2011-2014 National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES) found that adolescents are among the highest consumers of SSB in America, with two-thirds of youths consuming at least one per day and 47% of all added sugar intake coming from SSB.

According to NHANES, adolescent boys consumed an average of 164 kcal/day from SSB while girls consumed an average of 121 kcal/day, accounting for over 100% of the American Heart Association (AHA) recommendation for added sugar intake for adolescents. Older youths were found to have higher intakes of SSB than younger children.

Excessive added sugar consumption is associated with health conditions such as dental caries, obesity, dyslipidemia, cardiovascular disease, type II diabetes, and non-alcoholic fatty liver disease. Therefore, it is necessary to educate youth on the importance of limiting added sugars in their diets, especially those that come from SSB, to decrease their risk of chronic disease.

OUTCOME

In this lesson, participants will learn what the AHA daily added sugar recommendation is, why added sugar needs to be limited, which drinks contain added sugar, and healthier alternatives to SSB.

WHAT TO DO

Anchor: (5 minutes)
Begin the session by asking participants to name examples of drinks that contain added sugar. Ask participants how many of these beverages they consume per day. If class is virtual, this can be done via an anonymous Zoom poll or by using the chat box. If in person, a simple show of hands will be sufficient. Give participants the option to keep their answer to themselves if they feel uncomfortable sharing.

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Add: (10 minutes)

Share the American Heart Association's recommendation for added sugar consumption: Kids ages 2-18 should have less than 25 grams or 6 teaspoons of added sugar daily for a healthy heart. Compare this recommendation to the average daily and yearly added sugar intake of an American.

Share sources of added sugar that are listed differently on a nutrition label (e.g., honey, high fructose corn syrup, etc.) and how to determine the amount of sugar in a beverage. Share short-term and long-term effects of excess sugar consumption and some healthier alternatives to SSB.

Apply: (5 minutes)

Share examples of SSB that are popular among teens and ask participants to guess the amount of sugar in each. Compare the sugar content to the AHA added sugar recommendation.

Ask participants to brainstorm healthier alternatives to SSB. Give examples of healthier alternatives.

Away: (5 minutes)

Participants will be challenged to set SMART goals to decrease SSB consumption. For example, I will replace soda with fruit infused water at least two times per day.

Evaluation: (5 minutes)

Participants will be given a questionaire based on the Tips for Teens Curriculum and what they learned.