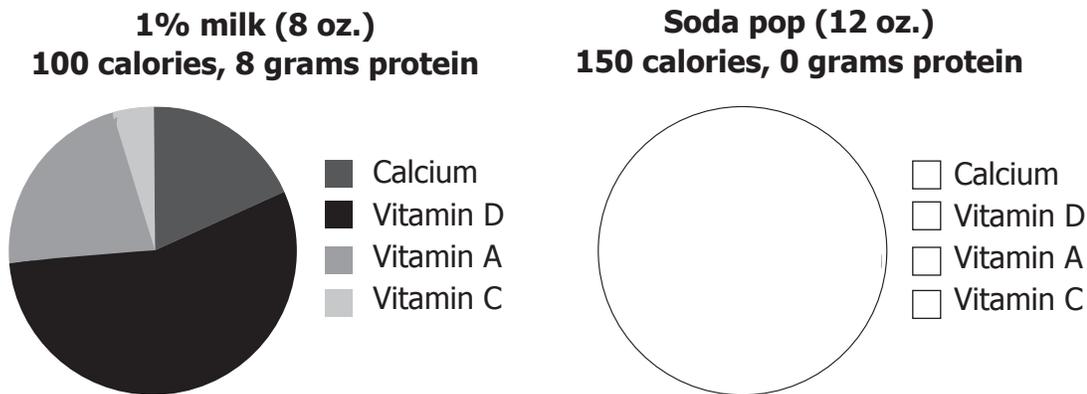


Think Your Drink

Think what you drink doesn't matter? What you drink makes more difference than you think. Many people don't realize how calories from beverages can add up.

What do you get for the calories?

The chart below shows the differences between regular soda and 1 percent milk. The two drinks below are different. Milk has nutrients, soda doesn't.



1% milk is low in calories, and has calcium and three vitamins. Soda has none of the calcium and vitamins of milk, and has more calories than 1% milk.

Choose beverages that contain vitamins and other nutrients like calcium. Milk and 100 percent fruit juice are good examples. They have calories but important nutrients, too. Limit your intake of empty-calorie beverages with lots of sugar or fat like regular soda, fruit drinks and coffee drinks.

Read labels carefully

Size matters. Bigger is not always better because super-sized beverages can mean super-sized calories. Watch serving sizes — there may be several servings in a can or bottle. How much do you really drink? If you drink the entire container, you may be drinking several servings. Be sure to compare calories and nutrients.

Differences in calories and sugar in two soft drinks: The can on the left is one serving, and the bottle on the right is more than one and a half servings.



20-ounce bottle

15 to 18 teaspoons sugar*
250 calories*

12-ounce can

9 to 11 teaspoons sugar*
150 calories*



* Source: *Soft Drinks and Weight Gain*, <http://missourifamilies.org>

Hidden calories

Look for hidden calories in the form of sugar.

Sweeteners often go by names other than sugar. Check the ingredient list for these common sweeteners. If any of these are the first or second ingredient, the drink has a lot in it.

High-fructose corn syrup	Syrup	Dextrose
Fruit juice concentrate	Fructose	Corn syrup
Honey	Sucrose	Sugar

But it's just coffee. Whole milk and flavored syrups can add hidden fat and sugar calories to your coffee beverage. Ask that your drink be made with skim milk instead of whole milk to reduce the fat. Skip the extra sugar calories that flavored syrups add.



It's easy to make better drink choices

There are plenty of ways you can reduce the amount of calories in what you drink.

- Stock your refrigerator with nutrient-rich beverages like low-fat milk or 100 percent fruit juice.
- Carry a water bottle and refill it throughout the day.
- Choose water, fat-free or low-fat milk and diet or low-calorie beverages instead of sugar-sweetened drinks.
- 100 percent fruit juice still has calories, so don't overdo it.
- Try drinking vegetable juice for a snack.
- Go for the smaller size if you choose a sugar-sweetened beverage.
- Serve water with meals.
- Add flavor to water by adding a slice of lemon or lime, or a splash of 100 percent fruit juice.
- Be a role model for family and friends by choosing healthy, low-calorie beverages.

