

# Beverages and the intake of energy, sugar, calcium and vitamin C

More so than ever before Australians have access to a wide variety of drinks to quench their thirst, provide enjoyment and ensure adequate hydration.

Analysis of the 2011-2012 National Nutrition and Physical Activity Survey by the CSIRO reveals the role of all beverages (including alcohol, coffee, tea, soft drinks and dairy-based beverages) to daily intake of energy and nutrients among Australians<sup>1</sup>.

## Top 5 most popular beverages



+ < 5% of children consumed: Coffee, energy and sports drinks, milk alternatives and alcoholic drinks

++ < 5% of adults consumed: Energy and sports drinks, other beverages and milk alternatives

## How much did we drink?

Average consumption (g) of drinks for all consumers of that drink on the day of the survey.

	Children (2-18 years)	Adults (19+ years)
Tea	356	535
Coffee	308	470
Fruit Juice	344	391
Cordial	441	633
Soft Drink	430	545
Energy Drinks	541	606
Other Beverages*	166	228
Plain Milk	337	322
Flavoured Milk	382	466
Milk Alternative	283	287
Alcohol	862**	806
Water	983	1302
<b>All Beverages</b>	<b>1454</b>	<b>2265</b>

\*Defined as powdered flavourings with water, probiotic drinks, breakfast cereal beverages

\*\*A small % of mostly males aged 14-18 years old

# Beverages contributed...



## Energy

**15.8%** of total daily energy intake  
Greatest total daily energy intakes:

- 16% in children aged 2-3 years
- 17.1% in 19-30 year adult age group
- 17.5% in 31-50 year adult age group



## Sugar

**35.7%** of total daily sugar intake  
Greatest total daily sugar intakes:

- 43% in children aged 14-18 years
- 43.1% in 19-30 year adult age group

For all age groups, beverage intake contributed more than 25% of dietary sugar intake.



## Calcium

**28%** of total calcium intake  
Greatest total daily calcium intakes:

- 35.1% in children aged 2-3 years
- 30.4% in 31-50 year adult age group

For all age groups, beverage intake contributed almost, or above, 25% of dietary calcium intake.



## Vitamin C

**23.7%** of total vitamin C intake  
Greatest total daily vitamin C intakes:

- 29.9% in children aged 9-13 years
- 27.7% in 19-30 year adult age group

For all age groups, beverage intake contributed above 20% of dietary vitamin C intake except the oldest adult age group (71 years and older).

...for the total population.

## Top contributors to energy, sugar, calcium and vitamin C intake

### Children (2-18 years)



### Adults (19+ years)



Energy		Energy	
Plain Milk	3.1%	Alcoholic Drinks	5.6%
Flavoured Milk	2.8%	Coffee	3.1%
Fruit Juice	2.6%		
Soft Drinks	2.1%		
Sugar		Sugar	
Fruit Juice	9.8%	Coffee	8.4%
Soft Drinks	8.7%	Soft Drinks	8%
Flavoured Milk	5.2%	Fruit Juice	5.9%
Plain Milk	5%	Tea	3.5%
Cordial	2.6%	Flavoured Milk	2.8%
Calcium		Calcium	
Plain Milk	9.9%	Coffee	10.6%
Flavoured Milk	7.6%	Flavoured Milk	3.6%
		Tea	3.3%
		Plain Milk	2.9%
Vitamin C		Vitamin C	
Fruit Juice	23.4%	Fruit Juice	13.4%
Flavoured Milk	2.2%	Alcoholic Drinks	6.1%

### References

1. Riley M, Hendrie G, Baird D. Drink Choice is important: beverages make a substantial contribution to energy, sugar, calcium and vitamin c intake among Australians. *Nutrients* 2019, 11(6): 1389.
2. National Health and Medical Research Council. Australian guidelines to reduce health risks from drinking alcohol: Commonwealth of Australia 2009. Available at <http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/guidelines/publications/ds10>
3. NHMRC. Australian Government. NZ Ministry of Health. Nutrient reference values for Australia and New Zealand. 2006. Canberra: Australia.

## Key Points



Although water is the most consumed drink by Australians, we are still not drinking recommended amounts for good health. Recommended fluid intake for adults (19 years and older) is at least 2.1 L/day and for children (9 years and older) is at least 1.4L/day<sup>3</sup>.

The water category was consumed by the highest percentage of Australians and in the highest daily amount:

- Consumed by 84.1% of adults and 90.5% of children
- 983g for children and 1302g for adults

Many Australians are exceeding the recommended alcohol intake guidelines<sup>2</sup> of drinking no more than two standard drinks on any day to reduce lifetime risk of harm.

- One third of adults consumed alcoholic drinks and the average daily amount they consumed was over 800g
- Alcohol was the largest beverage contributor to energy intake (5.6%) in adults



Non-alcoholic beverages are making important contributions to calcium and vitamin C intakes.

- For children, milk and flavoured milk are the highest beverage contributors to calcium intake (9.9% plain milk, 7.6% flavoured milk)
- For adults, coffee was the top contributor to calcium intake (10.6%)
- Fruit juice contributed almost a quarter (23.4%) of children's vitamin C intake and 13.4% of adults' vitamin C intake

Although a range of beverages are contributing to sugar intake, the majority is from other food categories.

- Coffee, soft drinks, fruit juice and tea (in that order) are the top beverage contributors to adults' sugar intake
- Fruit juice, soft drinks, flavoured milk and plain milk (in that order) are the top beverage contributors to children's sugar intake

