

Maintaining your teenager's well-being

HYDRATION

A significant portion of the body comprises water. Insufficient intake can lead to decreased productivity, both mentally and physically, with symptoms like fatigue, confusion, decreased energy levels, and the urge to snack when not truly hungry (as thirst is often confused with hunger). It is recommended that we should drink 6-8 glasses of water each day, which is about 1.5-2 litres. Tea and coffee count towards this.

Have water readily available

To ensure your teenager stays hydrated, it's essential to have water readily available – at their workstation, in bottles in their bag while on the move, and provided with meals. While plain water is recommended, you can enhance it by infusing natural flavours like lemon, lime, orange and mint. If your child never sees you drinking a glass of water they are less likely to think of drinking themselves.

Other drink options

While natural fruit juices are a healthy choice, they can be high in natural sugars. Consider diluting them to reduce the sugar content. Opt for herbal teas or honey with a hint of lemon for warm, caffeine-free alternatives. It's advisable to restrict your child's consumption of fizzy drinks, regardless of whether they are calorie-controlled or not, including energy drinks. Over consumption of these beverages can be detrimental to your health.

Energy shots and drinks

Energy shots may seem small, but they can be deceptively high in caffeine content. For instance, a 60 ml shot can contain approximately 200mg of caffeine. On the other hand, energy drinks may not have extremely high caffeine concentrations, but they are often served in large quantities (like half-litre bottles), leading to a significant caffeine intake for your child (e.g., 160mg of caffeine in a can of Monster). Opting for a smaller serving size of the same product would be a better choice.



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Caffeine

The impact of caffeine varies from person to person, with some individuals being more sensitive to its effects. On average, adults should limit their daily caffeine intake to 400 mg, while adolescents should consume even less.

Caffeine's impact

Consuming excessive caffeine can lead to insomnia, reduced energy levels, decreased mood, and lack of focus – which are counterproductive for effective studying. Since caffeine has a lasting effect, consuming caffeinated beverages in the afternoon can still disrupt your child's ability to sleep at night. It is strongly advised against having coffee or other caffeinated drinks late in the evening to combat tiredness and study into the night.

If you find yourself relying on strong coffee multiple times a day to boost your energy, it can affect your ability to sleep at night and send the wrong message about managing tiredness.

