

Week 4 – July 21

Drink Smart This Summer

July is a great time to revisit your New Year's Resolutions for being more physically active and eating better. An important part of both of these is to pay attention to what you drink.

While being active during the hot summer months, it is important to stay hydrated, especially if you are outside for long periods of time and are sweating. Because of the tendency to drink more when it is hot, choosing a healthier drink is even more important.

Water is the best choice, and a cold glass of water is very refreshing on a hot day. Water itself has no calories. For a splash of flavor, add a slice of lemon, lime or orange to your water.

If you are very active, vigorously exercising for more than an hour, a sports drink may be needed to help replenish electrolytes lost through sweat. However, if you are not being as active, those drinks just add extra calories.

To keep yourself hydrated while being active, take regular water breaks. If your kids are outside playing all day, make sure they take some water breaks, too. It's also important to replenish any water you lose when sweating. A good rule of thumb is to weigh yourself before and after exercising. For every pound you lose, drink two glasses of water.

If your resolution was to eat better, paying attention to what you drink is also important. While attending picnics, barbecues and other outdoor festivities, it is easy to lose track of how many sodas or beers you drink. That can add a lot of extra calories, which can lead to extra pounds if you are not careful. If you are going somewhere that you can bring your own beverage, bring a water bottle filled with ice and water. Then limit your soda and alcohol, and drink more water.

Here in the South, sweet tea and lemonade are staples of the summer. But these drinks are packed full of sugar. Try making them with less sugar or a sugar substitute. Or skip them altogether and go for a low-calorie drink mix or plain water.

Paying attention to what and how much you drink can help you stay on track this summer and stay true to your resolution.