

Kids and Caffeine

Have you noticed there are many caffeine containing foods and drinks available? Often marketed as energy boosters, these foods include soft drinks, mocha and coffee beverages, energy drinks and “slushee” type drinks.



Why should we be concerned? Caffeine does not help learning; in fact too much of it can make learning more difficult. Children can become irritable, restless and have a hard time concentrating.

It is important that children’s caffeine intake be limited to:

- 45 mg for children aged 4-6
- 62.5 mg for children aged 7-9
- 85 mg for children aged 10-12

There is no caffeine recommendation for teens however, it would be important to limit intake to 400 mg or less per day.

It would be easier to limit caffeine if it was only in certain products like coffee, tea, and some soft drinks. However, over the last few years grocery and convenience stores have been flooded with a lot of caffeine containing products. Below is a list of the caffeine content of some foods that may surprise you.

| Source of caffeine | Serving size | Caffeine content |
|---|--------------------|------------------|
| Coffee | 300 mL (10 oz) | 142 - 214 |
| Frozen coffee beverage (Iced cappuccino) (“fast food”– small) | 300 mL (10 oz) | 70 - 120 |
| Milky coffee beverage (small) | 300 mL (10 oz) | 58 |
| Iced tea | 300 mL (10 oz) | 30 |
| Chocolate milk | 250 mL (8 oz) | 5 - 8 |
| Cola soft drink | 355 mL can (12 oz) | 36 - 46 |
| Energy drinks | Varies | 70 - 170 |
| Energy “slushee” type drinks | 300 mL (10 oz) | 25 |

Energy drinks are not recommended for children, but they are easily available at local convenience stores.

When children are looking for treats, keep caffeine in mind. Choose drinks with little or no caffeine or choose smaller servings of drinks containing caffeine.



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