



### SPORTS DRINKS AND ENERGY DRINKS



Today your child analyzed some of the contents of sports and energy drinks, as well as other beverages. Here's a bit of background information on why sports and

energy drinks are usually not the best choice for children and young adolescents.

#### Sports drinks

These beverages, meant to replace water and electrolytes lost during exercise, have carbohydrates, minerals and electrolytes as well as added coloring and flavoring. They can be helpful to athletes who are doing intense activity but for children are usually just a source of extra calories.

#### Energy drinks

These beverages may have similar ingredients as sports drinks and also have stimulants such as caffeine and guarana or ginseng (herbs and plants).

Energy drinks often have much more caffeine per serving than other beverages. Caffeine in children can cause side effects such as:

- an increase in heart rate
- problems sleeping
- high blood pressure
- anxiety and nervousness.

When children drink a lot of energy drinks and then stop drinking them, they can go through caffeine withdrawal. Effects of caffeine withdrawal may include:

- headache
- irritability
- fatigue (tiredness)
- trouble concentrating
- decreased alertness
- muscle pain or stiffness.

### AT HOME ACTIVITY

It can be very hard to know how much caffeine you have each day. A typical cup of coffee has about 100 milligrams. The labels on most products, such as sodas, energy bars, and energy drinks, don't actually list the amount of caffeine. It just lists that it is in the product. Use the "Energy Drinks: What You Need to Know" handout provided on [healthpoweredkids.org](http://healthpoweredkids.org) under Additional Instructor Resources, within the lesson to track how much caffeine you have each day. If the amounts aren't listed on the packaging, see what you can track down on the internet. Encourage all members of your family to participate and see what you learn together.



### FRUITY ICED LEMONADE

Try this refreshing, caffeine-free, nutrient-rich lemonade with a twist in place of a soda or other beverage.

#### Ingredients

10 cups lemonade, prepared according to package directions  
 6 medium strawberries  
 6 blueberries  
 6 raspberries  
 6 peppermint leaves

#### Directions

1. In 2 ice cube trays, place 1 piece of fruit or 1 peppermint leaf in each ice cube spot. Then, fill each ice cube spot  $\frac{3}{4}$  full with lemonade. Place both trays in freezer for 2 to 4 hours, overnight or until frozen.
2. Place 3 ice cubes in each glass. Pour 1 cup lemonade over ice to fill each glass.
3. Enjoy chilled.