

# Thirst Quenchers & Blood Sugars

Generally, when people think about making changes for controlling blood sugar, food comes to mind. But beverages can also have an effect on your weight and blood sugar levels. Especially when your blood sugar is elevated, it is important to drink additional fluids. This extra hydration helps your kidneys wash away some of the excess glucose.

Below are some ideas for very low carbohydrate and calorie drinks. Start with a good base, add some interesting ingredients, top off with a garnish or two and – Presto! - a tasty drink.

## Benefits of DIY Thirst Quenchers:

- Costs less
- Great taste
- Good for you
- Easy to share with friends!

## 3 Peaches' Favorite Ingredients

### Drink bases

- Herb teas (from your favorite tea bags, or fresh/ dried herbs)
- Soda water/carbonated water
  - Soda Stream or commercial seltzer
- Flavored vinegars
- Others

### Drink flavorings

- Fresh mint leaves
- Spices (cinnamon sticks, star anise, etc.)
- Ginger
- Extracts (vanilla, almond, lemon or other flavor extracts)

### Fruits & vegetables

- Cucumber
- Carrot
- Tomato juice
- Citrus (orange, lemon, grapefruit, etc.)
- Berries (strawberries, raspberries, blueberries, etc.)
- Melons (watermelon, cantaloupe, honeydew, etc.)
- Stone fruits (peaches, nectarines, plums, etc.)
- Apples, pears, etc.

### Other additions

- Protein powders

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- Light coconut milk
- Almond milk and other milk alternatives
- Milk

## Preparation methods

### Iced tea

- Start with a pot of boiling water. Pour water over herbal tea base (2 teabags per cup). Add in any additional drink flavorings. Let it stand until it cools. Add ice to serve. Sweeten to taste. Optional: add a garnish of mint, lemon, or cinnamon sticks. \* Note that you can make ice cubes out of ice tea, which will strengthen the flavor of your next batch of ice tea.

### Spritzers

Start with carbonated water. A good ratio is ½ carbonated water and ½ juice. Add in whatever additional flavors you like. Pour over ice.

### Blended drinks

Use fresh fruit and a fresh vegetable as your base. In a blender, combine fruits and vegetables and blend. Add in whatever additional flavors you like. Strain. Pour over ice and garnish if desired.

## Recipes

### Iced Tea

Choose your tea bags, or loose tea in a tea ball.

Use 1 bag or teaspoon per cup.

Pour boiling water over tea leaves.

Steep (let it sit) for at least 5 minutes. For stronger flavor it can sit much longer, even overnight.

For flavor enhancers, herbs and roots can be added with the boiling water. Fresh fruit or juice can be added just before serving.

Do not add ice to the entire batch, unless it will be served right away. The ice dilutes the concentrated flavor as it melts.

### Cucumber and zucchini blended drink

1 cucumber

1 zucchini

Juice from a lime

Stevia or other sweetener. Sweeten to taste

Dice one cucumber and one zucchini.

Place in a blender or food processor. Blend well. Add lime and sweetener.



Pour over ice and serve. Makes two servings.

### **Apple juice and vinegar spritzer**

1/3 cup juice, apple or other  
1 tbsp vinegar  
2/3 cup seltzer  
Ice

Combine and enjoy.

## **Additional Notes**

Beware of tonic water. It is a high sugar drink. Use either club soda or seltzer instead. Diet pop (or diet soda) does not raise your blood sugar, and should not be used to treat a low blood sugar reaction. But there are concerns with some of the non-caloric sweeteners, including Nutrasweet/ Equal aspartame, Splenda/ sucralose, Sweet'n'Low/ saccharin. Many products contain artificial sweeteners besides diet pop. These include sugar free Kool-Aid, Mio, Jello and more.

Stevia is different. It is a plant, a cousin of mint, and can grow in your garden. Adding a leaf to a smoothie really picks up the flavor.

Alcohol: Alcohol actually lowers blood sugar by reducing the glucose production from the liver. For this reason, if you have an alcoholic drink with fruit or something sweet, they your blood sugar can become unpredictable, shifting higher or lower than expected. Never drive after drinking any alcohol for this reason.

## **15 Natural Ways to Flavor Water**

1. **Citrus fruit** – Lemons, lime, oranges, grapefruit. Flavor is just a squeeze away!
2. **Tea** – A tea bag works just as well in cold water as it does in hot water. Just steep it for longer. Hibiscus (Red Zinger) tea is a great flavor option - Just put four bags in a pitcher for a few hours. You can also make a sun tea by steeping one tea bag in water. Set in the sun for several hours, let it cool down, and pour over ice. YUM!
3. **Ginger** – Steep slices of ginger in hot water. Pour over ice.
4. **Sliced cucumber** – Thinly slice and toss in your water.
5. **Mint or Parsley** – Break apart the leaves to release the flavor.
6. **Unsweetened fruit juice** – Try cranberry or pomegranate juice. Just add a splash or two to a glass of water. Zing!
7. **Fruit** - Berries (strawberries, raspberries, blueberries, blackberries, etc.), peaches, pineapple, melons, etc.



8. **[Sangria water](#)** – Mix the following and let steep for four hours: 1 quart filtered water; 4 slices each of lemon, orange and lime; 1 ripe peach, cut into quarters; 1 cup fresh pineapple chunks
9. **Fresh stevia leaves** – Stevia is a naturally sweet non-caloric leaf that is usually sold in packets, but it also makes a nice houseplant. Read more about [growing Stevia](#).
10. **Lemongrass** – Let a sprig of lemongrass steep sit in a glass of water for a few hours.
11. **Citrus fruit ice cubes** – Fruits can be frozen whole and used as ice cubes. You could do the same thing with mandarins, clementines or satsumas.
12. **Vinegar** – Adding vinegar to water is similar to adding citrus.
13. **Lavender buds** – Put them in a small muslin bag and let it steep for a while.
14. **Spiced Ginger and Citrus Infusion** – Steep the following over hot water for 5 minutes, then drink it hot or on ice: 1/2 in of peeled ginger, a couple of cloves, a small piece of cinnamon stick, and a couple of slices of citrus fruit.
15. **Spice it up!** - Adding lemon juice and cayenne pepper to water is also delicious!

