



Healthy Beverage Initiative – FAQs

What is the Healthy Beverage Initiative?

In alignment with SFGH's strategic plan to enhance wellness, the Healthy Beverage Initiative formalizes our commitment towards creating a healthy environment that promotes healthy lifestyles for patients, staff, visitors and the community at large. To this extent, SFGH will not offer any sugar sweetened beverages (SSBs).

Why now?

San Francisco General's patient population are disproportionately impacted by the negative health outcomes due to overconsumption of sugar, including higher rates of adults and children who drink soda daily, overweight and obesity, and hospitalization due to diabetes complications.

How are sugar sweetened beverages defined?

Sugar-sweetened beverages are defined as a beverage with one or more added caloric sweeteners and contains more than 25 calories per 12 ounces of beverage. It does not include milk, 100% fruit juice, infant formula, medical food, or a supplemental meal replacement or sole-source nutrition.

What does this mean for Patient Food Service?

Sugar sweetened beverages will not be available to patients on the patient menu, nor in nourishments centers, with the exception of 100% fruit juice, infant formula, medical food, or a supplemental meal replacement or sole-source nutrition. Carbonated diet (Lemon-Lime diet soda) and non-diet beverage (lemon and a peach flavored sparkling carbonated seltzer water) will be available. In the rare instance that sugar sweetened beverages are requested by patients, alternative options should first be discussed and SSB only offered if patient insists. The Diet office will then process with notification by the Registered Dietitian.

What does this mean for Cafeteria, vending machines, and other food concessions?

A variety of healthy beverages including water, unsweetened tea, coffee, 100% fruit juice, milk, diet and zero calorie soft drinks, and sparkling water will be offered throughout the campus. Only non-sugary sweetened beverages are to be offered through all concessions on campus.

For a list of non-sugary beverage options, please contact Wellness Program Coordinator, erika.sarmiento@sfdph.org.

For questions:

- Shermineh Jafarieh, MS, Associate Hospital Administrator, Director of the Community Wellness Program Shermineh.Jafarieh@sfdph.org or Erika Sarmiento, Wellness Program Coordinator, Erika.Sarmiento@sfdph.org
- Sylvia Shih, CDM, Director, Department of Food and Nutrition Services Sylvia.Shih@sfdph.org
- Corilee Watters, PhD, RD, Assistant Director, Department of Food and Nutrition Services Corilee.Watters@sfdph.org
- Dr. Rita Nguyen, MD, Faculty Hospitalist | Division of Hospital Medicine Rita.Nguyen@ucsf.edu