

Healthful Eating

5 Smart Ways To

Go Green With Drinking Water

Going Green:
Simple Steps for
N.C. Families

Drinking enough water is important. After all, 60 to 70 percent of our bodies are water. BUT, the bottled water craze has created a huge problem. Billions of gallons of oil are used to make plastic bottles. Billions of bottles are thrown away in landfills. Here's what you can do.

Turn on the tap

- ▶ The evidence is clear. Tap water is cheaper. It's often healthier. And, it's always better for the planet than bottled water. In fact, 25 to 40 percent of bottled water comes straight out of a tap somewhere. Ignore the fancy ads. Turn on your tap for clean water that is hundreds (or thousands) times cheaper than bottled. For more information, go to www.drinktap.org.

Use glass or metal containers

- ▶ Experts agree that the safest water containers are made of either glass or stainless steel. Use a drinking glass found in your kitchen. You can also buy a stainless steel bottle. They come in lots of sizes and styles. You can find different colors and designs. They cost somewhere in the range of \$10 to \$25. But, think about the money you will save when you don't buy bottled water.

Choose plastic bags and bottles wisely

- ▶ The problem with plastic bottles (besides the tons in landfills) is **BPA** (or **bisphenol-A**). BPA is a chemical that may increase cancer risk. Scientists are still checking the facts. But, many experts agree that **BPA-free** plastic is better (especially for baby bottles). Most companies and stores now sell **BPA-free** reusable bottles and bags at a reasonable cost.

Reduce and recycle plastic bottles

- ▶ Not everyone agrees about whether it is safe to reuse plastic bottles sold with water or other beverages. They are hard to clean and they may leach chemicals. The most environmentally-friendly thing to do is to buy a reusable bottle. If you must buy bottled water, always buy the largest size possible and always recycle the plastic.

Save water whenever you can

- ▶ Water is a precious and limited resource on our planet. We all need to think beyond our own water bottle. There are lots of ways to use less water. You can take shorter showers. Wash only full loads of clothes. Turn off the water when you brush your teeth. Fix a leaky faucet. For **100 Ways to Conserve** and more, go to www.wateruseitwisely.com.