

Choosing the Right Beverage

Below is a sampling from hundreds of articles about the dangers of drinking sugary soft drinks, sports drinks and energy drinks. Soft drinks like sodas, lemonades, iced teas, some fruit waters and more offer nothing but empty calories and a host of health risks if consumed regularly.

The average, even very active, person has absolutely no need of the sugar laden artificially colored and flavored sports drinks that so many young people consume daily. Electrolytes can be replaced easily and naturally without the sugar and health risks posed by these drinks.

Caffeine pumped energy drinks are proving to be a very dangerous beverage choice for the many adults who are turning to them too often to start the day, for a mid-day boost or even mixed with their evening cocktails. Energy drink related emergency room visits everywhere have doubled in recent years. Evidence is mounting that overconsumption of these drinks are the cause of heart attacks, arrhythmia, chest pains and seizures. Unfortunately, these drinks are increasingly consumed by children and teens.

CAFFEINE & TEENS - In a report, published in the February issue of the journal *Pediatrics in Review*, a summary of existing research existing research and concludes that the caffeine-laden beverages can cause rapid heartbeat, high blood pressure, obesity and other medical problems in teens. Combined with alcohol, the potential harms can be severe, the authors noted.

"I don't think there is any sensationalism going on here. These drinks can be dangerous for teens," said review lead author Dr. Kwabena Blankson, a U.S. Air Force major and an adolescent medicine specialist at the Naval Medical Center in Portsmouth, Va. **"They contain too much caffeine and other additives that we don't know enough about. Healthy eating, exercise and adequate sleep are better ways to get energy."**

Doctors and parents need to "intelligently speak to teenagers about why energy drinks may not be safe," Blankson said. "They need to ask teens if they are drinking energy drinks and suggest healthy alternatives."

CHOICES

You have many healthy beverage options; keep the sugary, artificially flavored and colored drinks to a once in a while treat (once or twice a week). Your health is at stake!

ALTERNATIVES: Homemade naturally flavored, lightly sweetened soda and waters, iced and hot teas lightly sweetened with natural sweeteners, flavored unsweetened milks (almond milk, coconut milk, etc), ½ & ½ 100% juice "sodas", 100% juice, plain old water.

The Effects of Soft Drinks on the Stomach

By Amanda Wehner, eHow Contributor

Many health experts would agree that soft drinks have become a marketable drug to today's youth. According to James Duke, Ph.D., soft drinks are full of phosphorus, which is a bone dissolving agent. Many other chemicals are found in soft drinks, leading many parents to wonder if their children should be drinking soda. Of particular concern is the effects of soft drinks on the stomach.

Weight Gain and Malnutrition

We all know that soft drinks have a great deal of refined sugar, which adds up to empty calories. Soft drinks lack substantial nutritional value, which leaves us feeling hungry. Excess calories that we do not burn off turn to fat, causing us to put on weight. The extra fat can lead to digestive problems in the stomach. Even diet soft drinks can be harmful--they often contain the chemical aspartame as a low calorie sugar replacement. Studies have shown that the chemical aspartame found in diet soft drinks can actually make us feel hungrier. Diet soft drinks have been attributed to the increase of obesity in younger children who are often the targeted consumers of soft drink companies. Extreme cases have shown that some people addicted to soft drinks have experienced severe gastrointestinal problems resulting in a loss of appetite. This can result in malnutrition, which can lead to a swollen abdomen and diarrhea.

Acidity In the Stomach

A major concern regarding soft drinks is the high phosphorus content, which has adverse effects in people with stomach problems. The phosphoric acid and carbon dioxide combination in soda makes soft drinks highly acidic. This reacts with the acids already in the stomach to create a more acidic environment. The phosphoric acid in soft drinks reacts with the hydrochloric acid in the stomach, causing indigestion, gas and bloating.

Caffeine Effects On The Stomach

A major complication with increased caffeine intake is the effect on gastrointestinal digestion. Caffeine acts as a diuretic, and can cause problems with normal digestive functions. Due to caffeine being a diuretic, it actually draws water out of the intestine and stomach. This removal of water can cause dehydration and aids in the deterioration of the stomach lining. If you find that you are having digestive problems, it is best to avoid soft drinks since they often contain high amounts of caffeine.

Non-Caffeine Soft Drinks

Non-caffeine soft drinks have been attributed with positive effects on the stomach. These drinks are often used for their carbonation effect to settle upset stomach. However, soft drink carbonation can actually irritate the stomach acids, and often eventually results in stomach bloating and more gas. If you have an upset stomach, it would be best to take a neutral stomach antacid to avoid the adverse effects of soft drink carbonation.

Read more: [The Effects of Soft Drinks on the Stomach | eHow.com](http://www.ehow.com/list_6162284_effects-soft-drinks-stomach.html#ixzz2LDQfbFoy)

http://www.ehow.com/list_6162284_effects-soft-drinks-stomach.html#ixzz2LDQfbFoy

Harmful Effects of Drinking Soft Drinks

By Erin O'Brien, eHow Contributor

Soft drinks are non-alcoholic beverages that may or may not contain sugar or a sugar substitute. Soft drinks that contain sugar or high fructose corn syrup have significant calorie content, whereas diet and unsweetened varieties do not. Soft drinks are often carbonated and most have no nutritional value. While there are questions regarding artificially sweetened diet soft drinks and their effect on health, **the evidence that consuming soft drinks sweetened with sugar or high fructose corn syrup can result in harmful effects has been thoroughly researched and documented.**

Obesity

According to a 2009 study conducted by the California Center for Public Health Advocacy, adults who consume more than one sugar sweetened soda per day are 27 percent more likely to be overweight or obese than those who do not. Overweight and obese persons are at an elevated risk of coronary heart disease, high blood pressure, stroke, abnormal blood fats, metabolic syndrome, cancer, osteoarthritis, sleep apnea, reproductive problems, gallstones, and perhaps most significantly, type 2 diabetes.

Dental Health

According to the American Dental Association, dentists have recognized the connection between oral health and exposure to sweetened beverages for some time, with decay being the most noted condition. The ADA reports that persons who consume sugary beverages increase the production of acid in the mouth whenever the sugary soft drink comes in contact with oral bacteria or plaque, which forms on the teeth and gums constantly. The acid then attacks the teeth for 20 minutes or more, putting them at risk for decay. In addition to sugars in sweetened soft drinks, the phosphoric and citrus acids in some soft drinks, both sugar and artificially sweetened, have been linked to tooth enamel erosion.

Calcium Deficiency

Those who replace calcium-rich beverages such as milk with regular or diet soft drinks risk calcium deficiency. Calcium deficiency increases one's risk of developing osteoporosis later in life, particularly for adolescent girls. The decreased bone mass associated with calcium deficiency can result in a propensity for bone breaks and fractures. The phosphoric acid in some soft drinks, both sugar and artificially sweetened, is cited by sources as having an adverse effect on mineral levels in the body, particularly calcium; and can deplete mineral levels in the body.

According to Mayo Clinic urologist Erik Castle, M.D., persons with kidney disease are at an even higher risk of having elevated levels of phosphorus in their blood. Their associated depleted calcium levels put them at risk of bone disease. In such cases, he suggests limiting phosphorus-rich foods, including cola-style soft drinks, or avoiding them altogether.

Read more: Harmful Effects of Drinking Soft Drinks | eHow.com
http://www.ehow.com/list_6465969_harmful-effects-drinking-soft-drinks.html#ixzz2LDWAnZgD

HEALTH DANGERS OF DRINKING SODA

May 23, 2011 | By Melinda L. Secor

Melinda L. Secor left a 20-year career in health care and developmental disabilities to become a full-time freelance writer. In addition to blogging regularly, she writes for numerous websites on a wide range of topics that include politics, finance, homeschooling, parenting, sustainable living/self sufficiency, health, developmental disabilities, gardening and many others.



Photo Credit soda machine image by Mat Hayward from Fotolia.com

Drinking soda on an everyday basis can have health consequences. While an occasional soda is not a health risk for most people, regular consumption, even one or two sodas daily, can add up to health trouble over the long run, whether it is diet soda or regular. **Over-consumption of soda has been linked to increased risk of a variety of diseases and health conditions, some of which can pose serious health risks.**

Obesity - Regular soda consumption has been linked with increased risk of overweight and obesity, which are, in turn, associated with higher risk of a heart disease, diabetes and many other serious health issues. A 2011 review published in the journal "Circulation" states that a positive association has been shown between sugar-sweetened soft drink consumption and weight gain in both children and adults.

Cardiovascular Health - Drinking diet soda regularly may affect cardiovascular health. According to a February 2011 news release from the American Heart Association, research presented at the American Stroke Association's International Stroke Conference found that people who drink diet soda every day have a 61 percent higher risk of vascular events than those who reported no soda consumption.

Metabolic Syndrome - Regular soda drinkers have been shown to be at higher risk of developing metabolic syndrome, which is a group of symptoms that indicate a heightened risk of heart disease, diabetes and stroke. To be diagnosed with metabolic syndrome, a person must display at least three of the following symptoms; excess fat in the abdominal area, high triglyceride levels, low HDL cholesterol levels, high blood pressure and high fasting blood sugar. According to a 2007 study published in the journal "Circulation," researchers concluded that there was a 40 percent higher adjusted prevalence of metabolic syndrome among participants who drank one or more soft drinks daily relative to those with infrequent soft drink

consumption, and this association remained consistent with both diet and regular soft drinks.

Kidney Problems - Diet soda has been associated with kidney problems, according to an August 2010 study published in the "Clinical Journal of the American Society of Nephrology." Study authors concluded that women who drank more than two servings a day of artificially sweetened soda saw a decrease in kidney function over 20 years that was three times the rate of decline found in women who did not drink diet soda. No association was found between the consumption of sugar sweetened sodas and kidney function decline.

Other Health Risks - Other health risks associated with regular consumption of soda include dental problems and increased osteoporosis risk. Soda contains acidic ingredients that can erode tooth enamel, resulting in tooth decay. Frequent soda drinkers often consume fewer nutrient-rich beverages in the daily diet, such as milk and juice, replacing them with soft drinks, decreasing calcium intake and increasing the risk of developing osteoporosis

Read more: <http://www.livestrong.com/article/449074-health-dangers-of-drinking-soda/#ixzz2LDqEHxHY>

9 Negative Effects of Sports Drinks

The next time you go to grab a sugary sports drink to hydrate yourself after the big game, think about these questionable health effects

Turn on the television or open your favorite magazine and you're likely to see an abundance of advertisements for Gatorade, Powerade, and other sports drinks bombarding you with claims that they'll provide the essential nutrients needed to help you achieve a superior workout while keeping you hydrated. Thanks to these drinks' high-profile brands (Gatorade is made by PepsiCo while Powerade is made by Coca-Cola), the splashy advertisements can be both intriguing and convincing. **Unfortunately, the claims they make are often far from the truth, as many sports drinks are not really what they appear to be.**

Not to be confused with caffeine-boosted energy drinks like Red Bull or Monster, **sports drinks are sugar-sweetened beverages that contain sodium and other electrolytes that are lost during exercise. While they may seem harmless, a sports drink is not the best beverage choice for the casual athlete.** Alana Fiorentino, RD, CDN, who is a clinical dietitian at SUNY Downstate Medical Center in Brooklyn, N.Y., states, "In addition to the fluid content, **sports drinks contain a significant amount of calories, mostly from sugar, and some electrolytes including sodium and potassium.** For the average person that doesn't participate in

regular high-intensity workouts, the added nutrients provide no additional benefits, and can lead to gradual weight gain over time."

1. **High in Sugar** - Just one 32-ounce bottle of Gatorade or Powerade can contain 200 calories and a whopping 52.5 grams of sugar. This means that chugging back a bottle of the stuff can add significant calories to your diet. So if you're drinking a sports drink as a casual athlete, you're likely drinking more calories than you're burning off.
2. **Not a Thirst Quencher** - Sports drinks don't actually quench your thirst as advertised. The reason that they may keep you more hydrated than water is because you'll actually end up drinking more. **A study in the Journal of Applied Physiology** found that the taste of the drinks along with salt and other ingredients found in them actually cause people to drink more. So while you may be keeping yourself hydrated, you're also consuming more calories than likely intended.
3. **Tooth Erosion** - The acid in sports drinks erodes the teeth even more than soda, and **the damage is irreversible**. According to a study published in the journal General Dentistry, after just five days of consistent consumption, the acid starts destroying tooth enamel that you'll never get back.
4. **Slows Dehydration** - Sports drinks' biggest claim is that they can help prevent dehydration due to intense physical activity better than water. However, **unless you're an Olympic athlete**, drinking water will more than adequately prevent dehydration during exercise. "High-sugar sports drinks can actually slow hydration," says Fiorentino.
5. **Hyponatremia** - Hyponatremia is a serious condition that occurs when your blood has an abnormally low level of sodium. This can be caused by dehydration **but more often is caused by overhydration**. **When Harvard studied a group of marathon runners**, they found that 13 percent had some degree of hyponatremia and that those who had been drinking sports drinks were just as likely to have hyponatremia than those who had been drinking water.
6. **No Protein** - One major goal of most athletes is to build muscle, but don't turn to sports drinks if you're looking to do so. Most sports drinks contain zero grams of protein, the nutrient that is an essential part of muscle-building.
7. **Not Enough Electrolytes** - Even though sports drinks contain electrolytes, the sugar content often **cancels out their benefits**. The electrolytes you need will be replenished after exercise if you eat a healthy diet. Electrolytes in sports drinks don't have enough of an effect to compensate for the other negative effects they bring.

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5 Health Problems Linked to Energy Drinks

MyHealthNewsDaily Staff | November 15, 2012 03:20pm ET

Concerns over the potentially harmful effects of energy drinks, especially when they're combined with alcohol, have been growing in recent years.

A story in the New York Times today (Nov. 15) added to that concern, noting that the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has received reports of 13 deaths linked to 5-Hour Energy, an energy drink. The drinks contain about 215 milligrams of caffeine, the equivalent of about two cups of coffee.

Here, a rundown of five worrisome health issues that have been linked to downing stimulating drinks:

➔ **Heart problems** - In recent years, the company that markets 5-Hour Energy has filed about 30 reports with the FDA of serious injuries associated with its products, including heart attacks, according to the New York Times story.

And in 2007, a 28-year-old Australian man suffered cardiac arrest after consuming eight cans of an energy drink, containing 80 mg of caffeine each, over seven hours. The patient did not have a history of chest pain.

Caffeine and other compounds in energy drinks can boost heart rate and blood pressure, said Dr. John Higgins, associate professor of medicine at the University of Texas Medical School in Houston.

Caffeine can cause heart cells to release calcium, which may affect heartbeat, leading to arrhythmia, Higgins said. The drinks may also disrupt the normal balance of salts in the body, which has been linked to arrhythmia as well.

However, there is not enough evidence to say unequivocally that energy drinks cause heart problems. More research is needed to determine the amount of energy drinks people need to consume in order to experience these negative effects, Higgins said.

➔ **The risk of miscarriage** - The FDA has also received one report linking a miscarriage to consumption of 5-Hour Energy.

Studies examining the effects of caffeine on miscarriage have been mixed. A 2006 study of more than 1,000 pregnant women found that those who consumed more than 200 mg of caffeine per day (from coffee, tea, soda or hot chocolate) were about twice as likely to have a miscarriage compared with pregnant women who did not drink caffeine. However, a study published in 2008 found no link between caffeine consumption (regardless of the amount) and the risk of miscarriage at 20 weeks of pregnancy.

Because study findings have not been conclusive, the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists advises that pregnant women limit caffeine consumption to 200 mg per day.

➔ **An increased risk of alcohol injury and dependence** - Studies suggest that combining alcohol and energy drinks can be dangerous.

Although caffeine is a stimulant, research suggests it does not "counteract" the sedating effects of alcohol. There is concern that mixing alcohol and energy drinks may keep people awake for a longer period of time, allowing them to consume more alcohol than they ordinarily would, according to an editorial published last year in the Journal of the American Medical Association.

A 2011 study of about 1,100 college students found those who downed energy drinks frequently were about 2.5 times more likely to meet the diagnostic criteria for alcohol dependence than those who did not consume energy drinks. The link may be due to the practice of mixing alcohol and energy drinks, or drinking caffeine to recover from a

hangover, according to the JAMA editorial. It could also be that caffeine's effects on the brain play a role in addiction, the editorial says.

➔ **Risk of drug abuse** - Another study of 1,060 students found that energy drink consumption in the second year of college was associated with an increased risk of prescription drug abuse (use of stimulants or prescription painkillers without a prescription) in the third year of college.

One explanation for the link "is that energy drinks, like prescription drugs ... might be regarded by some students as safer, more normative, or more socially acceptable than using illicit 'street' drugs," the researchers wrote in a 2010 issue of the Journal of Addiction Medicine.

➔ **Impaired cognition** - Although some students rely on energy drinks to pull all-nighters to study for exams, there's some evidence that the excessive levels of caffeine in the drinks impair cognition. A small 2010 study found that drinking moderate amounts of caffeine, about 40 mg, improved performance on a test of reaction time, but drinking higher amounts — equivalent to the levels found in a (250 ml) can of Red Bull, or 80 mg — worsened performance on the reaction test.

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Energy Drinks Linked to Adverse Health Effects-

CNBC/Reuters Report --- Shares of **Monster Beverage** fell after new research indicated that energy drinks may increase blood pressure and disturb the heart's rhythm. The company has come under mounting pressure from critics regarding potential health risks of Monster Energy, the top-selling U.S. energy drink. The company's shares were trading down following the news.

The research, which analyzed seven previously published studies and was presented at an American Heart Association meeting, found an increase of 3.5 points in systolic blood pressure for those consuming energy drinks.

"The correlation between energy drinks and increased systolic blood pressure is convincing and concerning, and more studies are needed to assess the impact on heart rhythm," said Sachin Shah, the lead author of the report and an assistant professor at the University of the Pacific in California..... "Patients with high blood pressures or long QT syndrome should use caution and judgment before consuming an energy drink," Shah said.

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Monster energy drinks have frightening side-effects... *from the Baruch College Ticker*

After 14-year-old Anais Fournier died from consuming highly caffeinated energy drinks, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) began an investigation of Monster Energy drink to research the amount of caffeine these drinks contain and their effects on health...According to an FDA report, Monster Energy drink, manufactured by Monster Beverage Company, has been linked to six deaths, a non-fatal heart attack and 37 reports of adverse events.....

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Are Energy Drinks Bad for You? The Health Side

Effects of Energy Drinks - By Karen Ansel, M.S., R.D., "Energy Crisis," July/August 2013

How much would you pay for a drink that promises to revitalize your mind and body, elevate your energy or give you the focus you need to cross every item off your to-do list? Catching a third wind is priceless, which is why energy-drink sales are in the billions each year. But there may be a hidden cost.

As sales skyrocket, so do energy-drink-related emergency room visits: between 2007 and 2011, they doubled from about 10,000 to nearly 21,000 visits. In a recent USC study—which randomly sampled emergency room patients—a third of patients who reported downing energy drinks had **adverse reactions ranging from heart palpitations to chest pain to seizures.** And, even more frightening, the Food and Drug Administration has received reports of at least 15 deaths related to energy drinks. Although there's no proof linking these negative reactions to drinking an energy drink, **"no one really knows how dangerous [energy drinks] are,"** says Michael Jacobson, Ph.D., executive director for the Center for Science in the Public Interest. **"They certainly raise a caution flag about drinking too much [caffeine] too quickly."** In fact, the FDA recently launched an investigation into the safety of caffeine added to food and beverages.....

Energy drinks may deliver an instant jolt that java doesn't. "Some contain large amounts of caffeine. And they're consumed differently than coffee. [Energy drinks] are gulped, rather than sipped," says Jacobson. And that's exactly where the problem lies. "In the ER we'll usually see somebody who has heart palpitations or maybe hand or body tremors from drinking too many. However, we have seen a few patients who have had seizures," says Sean Nordt, M.D., Pharm.D., director of toxicology at USC's Keck School of Medicine department of emergency medicine. **These reactions aren't imaginary either: a new (unpublished) study presented at the American Heart Association's 2013 Scientific Sessions found that downing energy drinks raises systolic blood pressure by an average 3.5 points and can cause potentially fatal irregular heartbeats.** Your risk of dangerous heart-rhythm disturbances is higher if you have an underlying heart condition or high blood pressure....

The most active ingredient in energy drinks is caffeine...most experts advise limiting your caffeine to 400 mg a day *max...***but you may not be able to find out exactly how much caffeine is in your can.** Energy-drink manufacturers are not required to list the amount of caffeine their products contain—whether it's marketed as a beverage or as a dietary supplement—unless it's added in the form of pure caffeine. If a drink's caffeine comes in the form of coffee, tea or another natural caffeine-containing substance, such as guarana, you might not know the total amount. **So even if a can says it contains 200 mg of caffeine per serving, it may deliver significantly more...**

Then, there's the question of whether energy drinks even deliver on their promises. **Caffeine has been shown to help people think more clearly and improve exercise endurance, but just a small amount (as little as 1.5 mg per pound of body weight or about 2 cups of coffee for a 150-pound person) will provide a boost—and more is not better.** Also, energy drinks' other ingredients—like vitamins, amino acids and botanicals—do little to enhance your energy or mental clarity, says a 2012 *Nutrition Reviews* report.