

Health and Wellness:
Soda: Tastes Great But Is It Worth All the Health Risks?
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As difficult as this may be for some people to read and comprehend, while soda may taste great, the health risks are enormous. Those seemingly innocent cans of soda are far from harmless.

Although The List Is Much Greater, Here Are Seven Reasons Soda Should Be Avoided:

1) If you didn't know this already, soda sold in the United States is packed with sugar primarily in the form of high fructose corn syrup (HFCS). A 1967 invention, HFCS has been used by Coca Cola since the 1980s. It is a major contributor to the rising rates of obesity, diabetes, heart disease and other chronic diseases facing Americans. For historical contrast, about 100 years ago the average American consumed only 15 grams of fructose, mainly in the form of fruit. Now, approximately one fourth of Americans consume greater than 135 grams per day, predominantly in the form of soda (totaling 53-57 gallons per year). Imagine the avalanche of destruction caused by a single can day after day, week after week. (For those wondering why HFCS is even used in the U.S., it's because soda is less expensive to produce with HFCS here due to government corn subsidies to our farmers and steep tariffs that limit sugar imports. Cane sugar sweetens soda in other parts of the world, such as Europe and Latin America, because it is more economical in those parts of the world.) Thus, we Americans are shooting our own foot.

2) Non-alcoholic liver disease, a term first used in 1980, is likely caused by HFCS intake as a result of a build-up of fat within liver cells. Much like alcohol consumption, HFCS is very hard on the liver. Comparing HFCS and glucose, with 120 calories of HFCS, 40 calories are stored as fat. With the same amount of glucose, less than one calorie is stored as fat. Thus, sweetened beverages are practically liquid candy and HFCS is equal to fat!

3) Excessive insulin also increases fat storage cells. Simply put, it makes a person's fat cells fatter.

4) There are striking similarities between the soda industry and Big Tobacco. This time children are the target with equally manipulative ads and damaging health effects. Not surprising, the soda industry funds research to discredit links between soda drinking and health problems.

5) A two-year old study found a strong link between high sugar consumption and the risk for depression and schizophrenia. Many people know that chronic inflammation plays a significant role in arthritis, bowel diseases, cancer, diabetes, heart disease and kidney disease. Not only can excessive consumption of sugary beverages cause serious physical health problems but mental ones as well. One explanation for why depression is involved can be explained because excessive insulin release is caused by a diet high in sugar. This can lead to falling blood sugar levels or hypoglycemia which in turn causes one's brain to secrete glutamate in levels which can cause agitation, anger, anxiety, depression and panic attacks. There is no question whether drinking soda affects one's behavior.

6) With the exception of being stranded on a desert with no fluid available, there is absolutely NO REASON anyone should ever drink soda. Limiting soda consumption to once or twice per year cuts a little slack but NO MORE!

7) If you think you're better off drinking diet soda, think again. Even knowing everything above, sadly, HFCS is the better choice over diet sodas because artificial sweeteners such as aspartame and sucralose (Splenda) have caused even more health problems over the last 30 years (e.g., asthma, brain cancer, joint pain, lymphomas, leukemia, neurological symptoms including headaches, depressed and anxious mood, seizures, strokes, memory loss, hallucinations and dizziness, sleep disorders, visual changes, weight gain/diabetes and weakness/fatigue). No one wants to have aspartame toxicity which is revealed through central nervous system disorders and compromised immunity. Quoting Carol Simontacchi's book, The Crazy Makers: How the Food Industry Is Destroying Our Brains and Harming Our Children she writes, "One liter of an aspartame-sweetened beverage can produce about fifty-six milligrams of methanol. When several of these beverages are consumed in a short period of time (one day, perhaps), as much as two hundred fifty milligrams of methanol are dumped into the bloodstream, or thirty-two times the EPA limit." Thus, poison is being consumed through artificial sweeteners.

Water Is The Safest Drink To Consume and Here Are A Couple More Options:

Read more here: http://www.dukehealth.org/health_library/health_articles/water-water-everywhere-how-to-avoid-dehydration and [http://www.thepreventionsocialworker.org/uploads/MBSH - Article 16f - Got Water.pdf](http://www.thepreventionsocialworker.org/uploads/MBSH_-_Article_16f_-_Got_Water.pdf)

For a little variety, enjoy real juice from fresh-squeezed fruit, flavored club soda and unsweetened tea.

Why Isn't Someone Doing Something About the Soda Industry in the U.S.?

If you are wondering why an alarm bell isn't ringing concerning this important but little-known information, you need only look as far as the dollar. Huge soda, candy and pharmaceutical corporations are sponsoring the official website for dietitians and the like. Here's the link: <http://www.eatright.org/corporatesponsors/>. Also, Coca-Cola alone, for example, spends close to \$3 billion per year on advertising. Big soda has created front groups to battle anti-soda legislation as well as science. No doubt that the United States is fertile grounds to purchase its consumers.

Here are some of the links used to write this article:

- 1) <http://www.mayoclinic.org/news2010-mchi/5914.html>
- 2) <http://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2009/04/harvard-nutritionists-take-aim-at-sugary-drinks/>
- 3) http://my.clevelandclinic.org/be_well/rethink_your_drink.aspx
- 4) <http://www.massgeneral.org/about/newsarticle.aspx?id=2958>
- 5) http://nyp.org/nutrition/resources/articles_candy.html
- 6) <http://articles.mercola.com/sites/articles/archive/2011/11/21/soda-linked-to-health-problems.aspx>
- 7) <http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/the-depression-cure/200907/dietary-sugar-and-mental-illness-surprising-link>
- 8) <http://www.webmd.com/diet/features/sodas-and-your-health-risks-debated?page=2>

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