



**THINK** Before You Drink

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# Why You Should Think Before You Drink

Before you buy a whole case of pop, beer, or juice, have you ever thought about how much sugar there is? Here are a couple of things to think about before you decide to sip on something sweet.



**What does “soft drink” refer to?** Any beverage with added sugar or other sweetener such as soda, fruit punch, lemonade, other “ades,” sports and energy drinks.

**Fruit juice and energy juices are not that different than pop.** An 8 oz full calorie fruit drink has 110 calories and 7 teaspoons of sugar which is the *same amount* as an 8 oz full calorie soda or energy drink. Although some fruit juices have images of real fruit, some of these juices have no more than 5% of real fruit juice! The actual ingredients are water and high fructose corn syrup. Go for 100% pure, not from concentrate juice if you are going to drink some!

**Sugary drinks are not bad just because of weight gain.** Studies show that consuming 340ml a day of a sugary drink (less than 1 can) is associated with **increased risk of Type II diabetes** by **22%** in comparison to drinking one can a month or less (InterAct Consortium, 2013). As if this is not alarming enough, these drinks (ie: regular *and* diet soft drinks, sports/energy drinks, fruit juices) also contain acid that can lead to **tooth decay**. Acid weakens tooth enamel, which can seriously harm your teeth (Walsh, 2008).

**Be cautious with 0 calorie and 0 sugar drinks.** These drinks often contain artificial sweeteners. On one hand, smart consumption of these products (ie: diet soft drink) can help reduce sugars in your diet, thereby lowering your total caloric intake. On the flipside, artificial sweeteners can displace your appetite for wholesome, healthy food. For example, **sweeteners are far more potent than table sugar** and can actually make less intensely sweet foods (ie: fruit) less appealing, thereby shunning you *away* from the good stuff!



Source: <http://www.sugarydrinkfacts.org/>, <http://www.health.harvard.edu/>

The InterAct Consortium. (2013). Consumption of sweet beverages and type 2 diabetes incidence in European adults: Results from EPIC-InterAct. *Diabetologia*, 7, 1520-1530.

Walsh, L.J. (2008). Black Cola drinks, oral health and general health: An evidence-based approach. *ADA News Bulletin*, 373, 22-24.

# How Sweet is it?

Per 12 oz serving		TSP	G	CALORIES
<b>Soft Drinks</b>				
A&W Root Beer	RED	11	47	180
Coca Cola	RED	10	41	146
Mountain Dew	RED	11	46	170
Nestea Sweetened Lemon Iced Tea	RED	8	35	125
<b>100% Juice</b>				
Low Sodium 100% Vegetable Juice	YELLOW	3	12	74
Minute Maid Orange Juice	RED	10	41	165
Palm Bay (Strawberry)	RED	8	34	239
<b>Sport/Energy Drinks</b>				
Gatorade G Orange	RED	5	22	90
Red Bull	RED	10	40	165
Vitamin Water (Energy – tropical citrus)	GREEN	5	19.5	75
<b>Caffeine Drinks</b>				
Iced coffee with 1 teaspoon Sugar	GREEN	1	4	16
Homemade Iced Green Tea with 1 teaspoon Sugar	GREEN	1	4	16
Starbucks Mint Mocha Chip Frappuccino (w/ whipped cream)	RED	14	57	360
<b>Alcoholic Drinks</b>				
Margarita, frozen	RED	13	58.5	225
Mike's Hard Lemonade	RED	8	32	236
Beer	GREEN	0	0	153
White wine	GREEN	1	4	293
Red wine	GREEN	0.5	2	300
<b>Skim Milk</b>	GREEN	4	16.5	127.5

**RED** = Drink sparingly and infrequently (>12g sugar/12oz)  
**YELLOW** = A better choice, but don't overdo it (6-12g sugar/12oz)  
**GREEN** = Best choice (0-5g sugar/12 oz)

1 teaspoon of sugar = 4.2 g of sugar

Aim for drinks that are **GREEN** where you control the sugar content to no more than 1 tsp!

Source: [www.hsph.harvard.edu](http://www.hsph.harvard.edu), [www.thenutritionsource.org](http://www.thenutritionsource.org)

# The Lowdown on Sugary Drinks

Summer is prime time for a nice can of coke or tasty sweet beverages after a hot day, but there's one main reason why it tastes so good – **sugar**.

- Sugary drinks are a major contributor to the **obesity epidemic**.
- **People who drink sugary drinks do not feel as full as if they had eaten the same calories from solid food. Studies show that people consuming sugary drinks do NOT compensate for their high caloric content by eating less food.**
- Fruit juice is not a better option! Although it has the word “fruit” it contains more sugar and calories than soft drinks.

## How do soft drinks affect my weight?

An average can of soda or fruit punch has 150 calories, almost all from sugar or *high-fructose corn syrup*. That's equivalent to **10 teaspoons of sugar!** *If you drank one can of sugary beverage a day, you could gain up to 5 pounds a year.*



## Will drinking less pop actually help?

YES. A recent study of 33,097 people showed that among people with a genetic predisposition for obesity, those who drank sugary drinks were more likely to be obese than those who did not. This suggests, **genetic risk for obesity does not need to become a reality if one decides to avoid sugary drinks!** On the flipside, genetic obesity risk seems to be heightened when consuming sugary drinks.

Source: <http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/>

# How Do I Give up on Sugary Drinks?



Source: [www.webmd.com](http://www.webmd.com)

1. **Make up your mind.** Only you can change your habit and you have to make up your mind to give it up. Make a firm commitment to make it happen.
2. **Stock up on soda alternatives.** Two excellent alternatives that still contain calories but have vital nutrients like calcium or vitamin C:
  - a. "Spruced up" Water - You can spruce up your water by adding a sprig of mint or a slice of lemon, lime, cucumbers or even strawberries!
  - b. Vegetable Juice - A quick, low-calorie way to get some of the benefits of veggies. This contains much less natural sugar than fruit juices. BUT, vegetable juice can be high in sodium so opt for a *low-sodium* version. Better yet, make your own juice at home with a juicer!
3. **Make it black or green.** Black or green tea is calorie free and contains phytonutrients - like antioxidants in green tea. Make your own "iced tea" by steeping green tea, letting it cool, adding ice and 1 teaspoon of sugar or honey.
4. **Think outside the juice box.** Although 100% fruit juice contains nutrients, it is recommended to have **no more than one serving a day**. One way to cut the calories is making your own juice spritzer. Combine one part seltzer, water or club soda with one part 100% fruit juice (or freshly squeezed orange juice).
5. **Make H2O convenient.** Often we forget to drink water because it's not in front of us! Keep a water bottle on your desk, in the fridge or keep spares in the fridge if you prefer cold water. Make water drinking a habit.