

# Research Reveals This Common Drink Is Seriously Hurting You

Many people have turned to diet sodas as a perceived healthier alternative to high fructose corn syrup sweetened drinks. Diet sodas are sugar-free and get their sweetness from chemicals such as aspartame, sucralose and acesulfame potassium.

## Is Diet Soda Healthy?

The theory is that these low-calorie soda alternatives will not contribute to weight gain and therefore be a healthier choice for consumers. This is a reasonable proposition considering that a regular soda can easily have 40 grams of sugar from high fructose corn syrup in a single can!

But do these sugar-free sweeteners have their own problems?

There are many studies suggesting that they do. There is evidence that they can affect everything from gut health to metabolic syndrome. In fact, the sweetness of artificial sweeteners confuses the body into releasing insulin into the blood in anticipation of a blood sugar spike. But without any sugar to deal with, the insulin can actually become damaging to the body. These are not the only dangers of artificial sweeteners, however.

## Stroke and Dementia

A recent Boston University study has found that people who drink one or more diet sodas per day have triple the risk of stroke and dementia.

The researchers examined the soda drinking habits of nearly 3,000 adults, and although the mechanism of action has not yet been identified, the research found a strong correlation

between diet soda consumption and incidence of these debilitating brain diseases.

Sudha Seshadri, M.D., senior study author, neurology professor and faculty member at Boston University's Alzheimer's Disease Center, had this to say,

"These studies are not the be-all and end-all, but it's strong data and a very strong suggestion. It looks like there is not very much of an upside to having sugary drinks, and substituting the sugar with artificial sweeteners doesn't seem to help. Maybe good old-fashioned water is something we need to get used to."

So does this doesn't mean you should go back to drinking sugar-sweetened soda.

### **Sugar Is Still Harmful**

The incredible case against refined sugar consumption has been mounting for years. Sugar contributes to obesity, diabetes, Alzheimer's, leaky gut, and most autoimmune diseases. This is all especially true when talking about high fructose corn syrup, which is the sweetener of choice for most major soft drink brands.

Researchers have used a combination of magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) and cognitive tests to show that two sugary drinks per day can actually cause brain shrinkage. This leads to accelerated aging and memory loss, which are early signs of Alzheimer's.

### **Truly Healthy Alternatives**

If you are a regular soda drinker, do not fret. There are plenty of healthy carbonated drink alternatives that taste delicious and won't damage your health.

**Stevia Sweetened Soda:** Look for sodas sweetened with stevia, which is a natural sweetener that comes from the leaf of

the stevia plant. Although it may still play tricks on your insulin, it is a far safer alternative to artificial sweeteners like aspartame.

**Kombucha:** This fizzy fermented tea can be found in most health-food stores. Most brands do contain caffeine if you want the same pick-me-up you would get from conventional soda. They also have less sugar and are loaded with probiotics and enzymes for gut health. Many brands are also brewed with medicinal herbs to further add to their nutritional value.

**Sparkling Mineral Water:** If you are looking for the satisfying fizzy sensation from your beverage, the sparkling mineral water is a great choice. You can even add lemon or lime juice for some extra flavor and nutrition.

### **Lose The Soda, Find Your Health!**

With the mounting evidence of the harmful effects of soda, and with healthy alternatives readily available, it just makes sense to avoid drinking sodas. Of course, a soda every now and then is not going to kill you (immediately, at least), but if you are a regular consumer of sodas, it will drastically benefit both your short-term and long-term health to limit your consumption as much as possible. {eoa}

**Don Colbert, M.D.** *has been board certified in Family Practice for over 25 years and practices Anti aging and Integrative medicine. He is a New York Times Bestselling author of books such as The Bible Cure Series, What Would Jesus Eat, Deadly Emotions, What You Don't Know May be Killing You, and many more with over 10 million copies sold. He is the Medical Director of the Divine Health Wellness Center in Orlando, Florida where he has treated more than 50,000 patients. He is also a internationally known expert and prolific speaker on Integrative Medicine.*

*This article originally appeared at .*