

Study: Steady Sugary Drink Consumption Significantly Raises Diabetes Risk

Drinking just one can of sugar-laced soda drink a day increases the risk of developing diabetes by more than a fifth, according to a large European study published on Wednesday.

Using data from 350,000 people in eight European countries, researchers found that every extra 12 fluid ounce (340 ml) serving of sugar-sweetened drink raises the risk of diabetes by 22 percent compared with drinking just one can a month or less.

“Given the increase in sweet beverage consumption in Europe, clear messages on the unhealthy effect of these drinks should be given to the population,” said Dora Romaguera, who led with study with a team at Imperial College London.

A 12-fluid-ounce serving is about equivalent to a normal-sized can of Coca-Cola, Pepsi or other soft drink.

The findings echo similar conclusions from research in the United States, where several studies have shown that intake of sugar-sweetened drinks is strongly linked with higher body weight and conditions like type 2 diabetes.

Type 2 diabetes is a long-term condition characterized by insulin resistance that affects around 2.9 million people in Britain and, according to the World Health Organization (WHO), more than 310 million people worldwide.

Romaguera’s team wanted to establish whether a link between sugary drinks and diabetes risk also existed in Europe.

For their study, they used data from 350,000 people from

Britain, Germany, Denmark, Italy, Spain, Sweden, France and the Netherlands who were questioned about their diet, including how many sugary and artificially sweetened soft drinks and juices they drank each day.

Writing in the journal *Diabetologia*, the researchers said their study “corroborates the association between increased incidence of Type-2 diabetes and high consumption of sugar-sweetened soft drinks in European adults”.

Fruit juice consumption was not linked to diabetes incidence.

Patrick Wolfe, a statistics expert from University College London who was not involved in the research, said the message from its results was clear.

“The bottom line is that sugary soft drinks are not good for you – they have no nutritional value and there is evidence that drinking them every day can increase your relative risk for type 2 diabetes,” he said in an emailed comment.

(Editing by Michael Roddy)

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