

Why You Should Quit Drinking Diet Soda

When diet sodas were first introduced to the general public in the middle of the 20th century, they seemed like the best new thing in food since sliced bread. The idea was that you could drink sodas without counting calories and worrying about weight gain.

According to the University of Texas, 59 percent of Americans drinks diet sodas regularly, hoping to lose weight. Unfortunately, evidence shows that they do not help you lose weight. In fact, they increase your risk of becoming obese and may even be worse for your health than regular sodas.

“Artificial sweeteners are a disaster in their own right,” says board-certified family physician Dr. David Brownstein. “They’re known to cause neurological problems, autoimmune disorders and probably cancer,” he tells *Newsmax Health*.

If you’re still guzzling diet drinks, read on to see why you seriously need to quit—and you’ll also discover the best, least painful ways to ditch your habit. There are at least five good reasons, all backed by research, why you should quit drinking diet sodas:

- **Weight gain.** A study at the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio found those who drank diet sodas were more likely to become overweight than those who drank regular sugary sodas. For each can of diet soda consumed each day, the risk of obesity increased by 41 percent. After 10 years, those who drank two or more diet sodas a day increased their risk of obesity by 500 percent. “Data from this and other prospective studies suggest that the promotion of diet sodas as healthy alternatives may be ill-advised,” said Dr. Helen Hazuda,

professor of medicine at UT.

- **Diabetes.** A study published in the journal *Nature* found that diet sodas change the microbes living in the gut in a way that increases the risk of diabetes. Researchers at Israel's Weizmann Institute of Science found that mice fed artificial sweeteners developed glucose intolerance. They also found that people who regularly used artificial sweeteners, including aspartame and saccharin, had elevated levels of HbA1C, a measure of blood sugar. When they gave artificial sweeteners to people who didn't normally consume them, they found glucose levels were altered after only a week in more than half of the volunteers. A study conducted at the University of Minnesota found that a single diet soda daily raised the risk of metabolic syndrome and diabetes by 36 percent.
- **Rotting teeth.** The acids in diet soda can damage your teeth as badly as meth, according to Dr. Mohamed Bassiouny of the Philadelphia's Temple University School of Dentistry. He found that when he put photos of people with "meth mouth" and those who drank an excessive amount of soda side by side, the damage looked the same.
- **Weak bones.** Sodas may be especially harmful to the bones of women. Researchers at Tufts university found that women who drank sodas, including diet sodas, had lower bone density than women who didn't drink them. Another study, which was published in the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*, also linked sodas with low bone density. The phosphoric acid in sodas leaches calcium from bones.
- **Cardiovascular disease.** Researchers from Columbia University and the University of Miami found that a single diet soda daily over a period of 10 years increased the risk of heart attack and stroke by 43 percent. Drinking regular soda didn't appear to affect risk.

If you're still guzzling diet drinks, you've seen why you need to make a determined effort to quit. Here are five alternatives to help you beat your soda addiction:

- Drink unsweetened tea and coffee, hot or cold, to combat the headaches and other annoying symptoms of caffeine withdrawal. As a bonus, green tea and coffee supply valuable antioxidants.
- Try seltzer water. If you miss the "fizz" of soft drinks, drink seltzer water. Add a splash of lemon or lime to dress it up
- Try natural beverages. Pick up naturally carbonated, fruit-flavored beverages in health food stores or make your own by mixing 100 percent fruit juice half-and-half with carbonated water for a sweet fizzy drink that's good for you.
- Enjoy herbal teas. Herbal fruit teas, brewed strong, provide a flavorful, satisfying pick-me-up.
- Drink water. Healthy and cheap, water is perhaps the best drink of all. If plain water is a bit too boring for you, add mint, lime or lemon for flavor.

For the original article, visit .