

How much sugar is really in our favourite drinks?

Too much sugar in the diet can lead to obesity, diabetes, tooth decay and a range of other chronic yet preventable diseases. Most people are aware of the high levels of sugar in foods such as sweet biscuits, lollies, ice cream and sweet cereals such as fruit loops, however many people are oblivious to the extreme amount of sugar they are consuming each day through sugary drinks. So how much sugar is in soft drinks, energy drinks and juices? And are regular sugary drinks in your diet making you fat?



Sugary Levels in Drinks

Drink	Standard Sized Serving	Teaspoons of Sugar	Calories
Cola	375ml can	9-11	140
Diet cola	375ml can	0	0
Carbonated mineral water	375ml can	0	0
Small juice carton	250ml pack	4-9	220 (192 from sugar)
Chocolate Milk	300ml	6-8	400 (230 from sugar)

Drink	Standard Sized Serving	Teaspoons of Sugar	Calories
Vitamin Water	590ml bottle	8	125
Starbucks Mint Mocha Chip Frappuccino with whipped cream	12 ounces of each	14	240-400
Lipton Ice Tea	12 ounces of each	8	70
Coca Cola	12 ounces of each	10	140
Fanta	12 ounces of each	13	160
Pepsi	12 ounces of each	10	150
Schweppes Tonic Water	12 ounces of each	8	100
Schweppes Ginger Ale	12 ounces of each	8	120
Red Bull	12 ounces of each	10	108
Gatorade G Orange	12 ounces of each	5	30-80

If we are consuming this much sugar in one drink, how much are we allowed to have each day?

A 'moderate' intake of refined sugar can be an acceptable part of a healthy diet. Experts define a moderate intake as about 10 per cent of the total energy intake per day. However, people who consume a lot of sugary food and drinks do so at the expense of more nutritious food choices, and are often taking in a lot of 'empty calories'. Soft drinks do not provide any essential vitamins and minerals that your body requires to remain healthy.



Recommended daily calorie intake varies from person to person, but there are guidelines for calorie requirements you can use as a starting point. The UK Department of Health Estimated

Average Requirements (EAR) suggest a daily calorie intake of 1940 calories per day for women and 2550 for men. Therefore 1 can of soft drink can contribute to as much as 10% of your daily calorie intake and the entire recommended daily sugar intake, whilst providing no nutritional value.

A GROWING problem

Sweetened drinks are heavily advertised, cheap and commonly available. In Australia, the consumption of soft drinks has increased by 30 per cent in 10 years. The standard serving size for soft drink has also increased.

When the sugar consumed is not used it is converted to fat. Therefore, excessive amounts of sugar consumed often leads to weight gain. A child's odds of becoming obese increase by 60 percent with each additional daily serving of sugar-sweetened drinks. Most soft drinks contain 12 to 16 percent or more of a child and teenagers recommended daily allowance for sugar.

Excess amounts of sugar and soft drinks can also lead to tooth decay as the sugar produces acids, which break down the enamel and start tooth decay.

With the current epidemic of obesity in Australia it is recommended that sugary drinks really should be saved for special occasions and are an unnecessary health problem when consumed on an ongoing basis.

