

13 New Ways Colas Ruin Your Health

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1. Obesity

A British study found that when a child's fat cells mature, if fructose is present, more of the cells mature into fat cells in belly fat. And researchers at Princeton University found that rats who were fed high-fructose corn syrup gained 47 percent more weight than rats who were fed an equal number of calories, but without corn syrup. Diet drinkers aren't safe from weight gain, either. A study at the University of Texas Health Science Center, San Antonio, found that people who drink soft drinks don't lose weight; they gain. And the risk of obesity was even higher among those who drank only diet sodas.



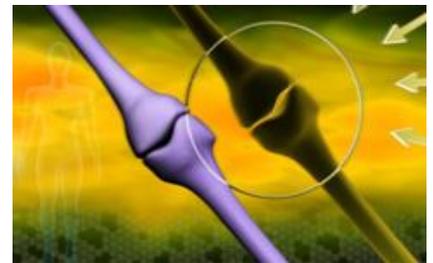
2. Cancer

When sodium benzoate, used for mold prevention in many soft drinks, is mixed with vitamin C, it creates a carcinogenic substance called benzene. Researchers at India's Tata Memorial Hospital found a "very significant correlation" between soft drinks and an increased risk of esophageal cancer, and other studies have linked soft drinks to the risk of deadly pancreatic cancer.



3. Bone fractures

Phosphoric acid, which gives drinks their "bite," leaches calcium from the bones. Diet sodas are just as much to blame as those sweetened with sugar. A study done at Walter Reed Medical Center found that diet sodas leached both calcium and phosphorous from the bones of healthy women, putting them at risk for osteoporosis.



4. Yellow teeth

Phosphoric acid, in addition to leaching calcium from bones, causes tooth enamel to erode, leaving yellow teeth. Normally saliva is slightly alkaline, but the phosphoric acid lowers the pH of saliva and causes tooth enamel to corrode. The result: yellow and rotting teeth.



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5. Cholesterol

A study published in *Circulation*, the journal of the American Heart Association, found that people who drank one or more soft drinks each day were 25 percent more likely to develop high blood triglycerides (a type of fat), and 32 percent more likely to have low levels of "good" cholesterol.



6. DNA damage

British researchers also found problems with sodium benzoate — they found it may be able to switch off vital parts of DNA called mitochondria, the "power station" of cells. The result could eventually cause's cirrhosis of the liver and other degenerative diseases, such as Parkinson's.



7. Diabetes

Research at Harvard Medical School and Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston suggests that women who drank one sugary drink each day doubled their risk of developing adult-onset diabetes when compared with women who drank fewer than one a month. And information from the Framingham Heart Study found that drinking one or more sodas a day, whether regular or diet, increases the risk of metabolic syndrome, a group of risk factors which increase the odds of both diabetes and cardiovascular disease



8. GERD

Studies have shown that people who drink sodas suffer more from gastroesophageal reflux disease than those people who didn't drink sodas. Sodas boost acid levels and often require medication. Sodas also cause other gastrointestinal problems: Chronic high-acid levels can inflame the lining of the stomach and duodenum.



9. Brain damage

More than 92 side effects are associated with aspartame, a sugar substitute used in diet sodas. They include brain tumors, emotional disorders, and epileptic seizures. But the brains of those who drink sugared soft drinks aren't safe either: A study at Georgia State University



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found that a diet high in fructose impaired the memory of rats.

10. High blood pressure

Researchers at the University of Colorado found that a diet high in high-fructose corn syrup increased the risk of developing high blood pressure by 87 percent. And a recent study of volunteers who consumed 74 grams of fructose daily, the equivalent amount found in four soft drinks, showed that a third of them had borderline high blood pressure, and 8 percent had hypertension, even though none had experienced blood pressure problems.



11. Kidney Stones

Numerous studies have shown that drinking colas enhances the formation of kidney stones. One study published in the journal *Epidemiology* found that drinking two or more cola drinks each day, whether regular or diet, doubled the risk of developing chronic kidney disease.



12. Fertility issues

A study published in the *American Journal of Epidemiology* found that men who drank more than a quart of cola daily had a sperm count 30 percent lower than those who didn't drink soda at all, putting them at risk of becoming infertile. And research funded by the European Union found that one cola a day containing artificial sweeteners increased an expectant mom's risk of miscarriage by 38 percent: Four or more cans a day increased the risk by as much as 78 percent.



13. Gout

Researchers from the University of British Columbia in Vancouver and Harvard Medical School in Boston found that men who consumed the highest levels of fructose — found in large amounts in sugar-sweetened colas — more than doubled their chances of getting gout.



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