

Reasons You Should Stop Drinking Soda

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January 20, 2018



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While we know soda isn't the best choice for us, many of us don't have a comprehensive idea of how bad it truly is. We spoke with some medical experts about why we need to say no to soda — and maybe start drinking more water instead.

It's Very High in Sugar

Dr. Philip Goglia, celebrity nutritionist and cofounder of G-Plans, the first online nutrition platform based on a user's metabolic body type, notes that a 20-ounce bottle of soda contains 16 teaspoons of sugar.

"The average American consumes nearly 42 gallons of sweetened beverages every year," Dr. Goglia told POPSUGAR. "After six months, daily consumption of sugary drinks will increase the fat deposits in a person's liver by 150 percent, a direct contributor to diabetes and heart disease." And when it comes to diet soda, in many cases it stimulates unwanted sugar cravings and can actually promote overeating.



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It Can Cause Insomnia

"If you drink soda in the evening, the extra sugar and caffeine from soda will make it harder to go to sleep, because it stimulates your body right as you're trying to calm down and get a good night's rest," Dr. Goglia said.

It Causes Weight Gain

Sodas (specifically diet sodas) do not promote any type of weight loss. "They adversely affect the metabolism by deregulating correct insulin response and carbohydrate management. The result can be nutritionally devastating, as in many cases the use of diet soda stimulates unwanted sugar cravings," Dr. Goglia explained.

It Can Have a Negative Effect on Your Bone Health

There have been warnings about the effects of carbonated drinks on your bones. "Carbonated beverages generally have their flavor enhanced with the use of phosphoric acid," said [Dr. Debra Jaliman](#), board-certified NYC dermatologist, assistant professor at Dermatology Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai, and author of **Skin Rules: Trade Secrets From a Top New York Dermatologist**. "This phosphoric acid can inhibit the absorption of calcium, therefore resulting in the loss of calcium from bone. When there is bone loss in the face, such as the mandible, it will affect cheekbones and make you look older."

It Leads to Tooth Decay and Stomach Issues

Though many sodas these day contain no sugar, they all still have a relatively high concentration of acid. "I don't think it's any secret that high acid content will erode your teeth," said [Dr. William Graves](#), an oral surgeon. The high content of acid in your soda eventually makes its way to your stomach. "This high content can lead to acid reflux. Acid

reflux has been shown to increase your risk of esophageal cancer, but the story doesn't end here," Dr. Graves said. "This stomach acid continues to your mouth, where it now starts to erode your teeth."

Most people tend to think the artificial sweeteners are the issue for sodas and tooth decay, but it's not just that. "Soda in general is acidic and thereby lowers the pH in your mouth," Dr. Jon Marashi, DDS, APDC, told POPSUGAR. The lower the pH is in your mouth, the odds increase to see damage to the enamel. "I recommend to patients to avoid acidic beverage consumption in general, but if you were going to have one, then drink it quickly rather than consuming it over a longer period of time to keep the mouth from being in an acidic state for longer than necessary," Dr. Marashi said.



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It Will Make You Break Out

"Salt is a known trigger for acne. I always recommend to my patients with acne to minimize sodium intake and specifically to avoid soda," said Robin Evans, MD, of Southern CT Dermatology. "My patients who have skin cancer or autoimmune skin conditions are best served to maintain a clean and healthy diet full of whole foods, trying to avoid unnecessary chemical intake. Soda, both regular and diet, would be clear 'nonfood' food sources to avoid."

It Affects Your Mood

Sugar affects your mood in at least two ways. "First, brain neurotransmitters like dopamine are released in response to sugary drinks like soda," explained Terra's Kitchen's Chief Nutrition Officer Dr. Lisa Davis, PhD, PA-C, CNS. The more you have, the bigger the pleasurable feeling, due to a release of feel-good molecules. "Just like the pleasure center of rats' brains light up when they taste the sugary sweet stuff, so do ours. Sugar also causes spikes in blood sugar levels that are followed by crashes. Along with the lows come unpleasant feelings and mood."

It Can Cause Gout

"Gout is considered a type of arthritis and is a condition in which the uric acid levels in the blood rise above normal levels," Susan Bowerman, registered dietitian at Herbalife Nutrition, told POPSUGAR. "When this happens, the uric acid forms tiny crystals that can lodge in the joints (notably in the big toes), where it can cause extreme pain, swelling, and tenderness. The fructose in high fructose corn syrup that is used to sweeten sodas leads to elevated uric acid levels."



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It Causes Premature Aging

If all of the above weren't enough, a study from University of California, San Francisco, published in the **American Journal For Public Health** in 2014, found that soda drinkers had shorter telomeres in their immune cells. "Telomeres act as little protective 'caps' that sit on the ends of chromosomes in your cells to keep them from shrinking," Bowerman said. "Telomere length is associated with lifespan, and shorter telomeres are associated with many of the chronic diseases of aging, including heart disease, diabetes, and certain forms of cancer."