

# WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU DRINK SODA?

## 63% of Americans Actively Avoid Soda

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By Dr. Mercola



Americans are finally starting to realize the dangers of soda, with nearly two-thirds (63 percent) saying they actively try to avoid soda in their diet, a new Gallup poll revealed.

This is a significant increase from 2002, when only 41 percent were trying to avoid soda, and a clear sign that, as *TIME* reported, “the soda craze is going flat.”

### Soda Consumption Falls to Lowest Level in Decades

As people drank more and more soda, rates of obesity and diabetes soared, and while the soda industry still denies to this day any connection, research suggests otherwise. The “supersized” mentality seems to have backfired for Coca-Cola and other beverage companies, because as the health risks become clear, sales have been on a steady downward spiral.

### Coca-Cola Seeks to ‘Reintroduce’ Coke to Teen Market, and in ‘Guilt-Free’ Sizes.

Part of Coca-Cola’s plan to bring soda back is, ironically, introducing smaller sizes, a strategy they believe might reposition Coke so “people stop feeling guilty when they drink it, or, ideally come to see a Coke as a treat.”

## YOUR BRAIN ON SODA

When you drink soda, numerous changes happen in your body, including in your brain. A new animal study, presented at the Annual Meeting of the Society for the Study of Ingestive Behavior, found that sugary beverages may be particularly damaging to the brains of adolescents, one of the key age groups soda companies are trying to “court.”

Both adult and adolescent rats were fed sugary beverages for one month. They then were tested for cognitive function and memory. While the adult rats did okay, the adolescent rats fed sugary drinks had both impaired memory and trouble learning. Next, the researchers plan to study whether SODA LEADS TO INFLAMMATION IN THE BRAIN’S HIPPOCAMPUS, WHICH IS CRUCIAL FOR MEMORY AND LEARNING.

### DIET COKE Sales Plummet Amidst Aspartame Health Concerns:

Diet Coke may not contain sugar, but that certainly doesn’t make it a better choice than regular soda. Here, too, Americans are catching on to the risks involved, *especially in regard to the artificial sweetener aspartame*. Their review of the data found that the studies did not prove aspartame’s safety, while other recent research suggests aspartame has potential carcinogenic effects.

You may also be surprised to learn that research has *repeatedly* shown that artificially sweetened no- or low-calorie drinks and other “diet” foods actually tend to stimulate your appetite, increase cravings for carbs, and stimulate fat storage and weight gain.

A report published in the journal *Trends in Endocrinology & Metabolism* highlighted the fact that diet soda drinkers suffer the same exact health problems as those who opt for regular soda, such as excessive weight gain, type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and stroke. For the record, *Coca-Cola maintains aspartame is a “safe, high-quality alternative to sugar.* “Clearly

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## WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU DRINK SODA?

Soda is on my list of the **ABSOLUTE WORST FOODS AND DRINKS YOU CAN CONSUME.**

**Once ingested, your pancreas rapidly begins to create insulin in response to the sugar.** A 20-ounce bottle of cola contains the equivalent of 16 teaspoons of sugar in the form of high fructose corn syrup (HFCS). In addition to contributing to insulin resistance, the rise in blood sugar is quite rapid. Here’s a play-by-play of what happens in your body upon drinking a can of soda:

- **Within 20 minutes, YOUR BLOOD SUGAR SPIKES, AND YOUR LIVER RESPONDS TO THE RESULTING INSULIN BURST BY TURNING MASSIVE AMOUNTS OF SUGAR INTO FAT.**
- **Within 40 minutes, CAFFEINE ABSORPTION IS COMPLETE; YOUR PUPILS DILATE, YOUR BLOOD PRESSURE RISES, AND YOUR LIVER DUMPS MORE SUGAR INTO YOUR BLOODSTREAM.**
- **Around 45 minutes, YOUR BODY INCREASES DOPAMINE PRODUCTION, WHICH STIMULATES THE PLEASURE CENTERS OF YOUR BRAIN – a physically identical response to that of heroin, by the way.**
- **After 60 minutes, YOU’LL START TO HAVE A BLOOD SUGAR CRASH, AND YOU MAY BE TEMPTED TO REACH FOR ANOTHER SWEET SNACK OR BEVERAGE.**

As I’ve discussed on numerous occasions, **chronically elevated insulin levels (which you would definitely have if you regularly drink soda) and the subsequent insulin resistance is a foundational factor of most chronic disease, from diabetes to cancer.** *Today, while many Americans are cutting back on sugary drinks, soda remains a dietary mainstay for many.* Along with energy drinks and sports drinks, **soda is among the top 10 sources of calories** in the US diet (number four on the list, to be exact),<sup>10</sup> and, in 2012, Gallup found that 48 percent of Americans said they drink at least one glass of soda a day, with proven detrimental impacts to their health.

### **Some Advice for Coca-Cola? Get Ready for a Class-Action Suit:**

*They are making attempts to rebrand Coke with a new, healthier image. Their new “Coke Life,” a low-calorie, low-sugar soda in a green can, no less, was designed to “quiet critics,” as it contains less sugar and no aspartame. Yet this new green-washed soda is just basically a cigarette with a filter.*

Then there is Coca-Cola’s even more insidious side. Investigative journalist Michael Blanding revealed in his book, *The Coke Machine -- The Dirty Truth Behind the World's Favorite Soft Drink*, that **Coca-Cola bottling plants in India have dramatically lowered the water supply, drying up wells for local villagers while also dumping cadmium, chromium, and other carcinogens into the local environment. Similar claims have been made in Mexico. In many third-world countries, they already don’t have access to clean water, making soda their only choice for a non-contaminated beverage. As the demand for soda grows, the bottling plants increase, further taxing the water supplies left, in a vicious and dangerous cycle.**

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### Join the Growing Number of People Saying 'No' to Soda

Remember, nothing beats pure water when it comes to serving your body's needs. If you really feel the urge for a carbonated beverage, try sparkling mineral water with a squirt of lime or lemon juice, or sweetened with stevia or Luo Han, both of which are safe natural sweeteners.

Remember, if you struggle with high blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes, or extra weight, then you have insulin sensitivity issues and would likely benefit from avoiding ALL sweeteners.

Sweetened beverages, whether it's sweetened with sugar, HFCS, naturally occurring fructose, or artificial sweeteners like aspartame, are among the worst culprits in the fight against obesity and related health problems, including diabetes and heart and liver disease, just to name a few.

Ditching ALL of these types of beverages can go a long way toward reducing your risk for chronic health problems and weight gain, not to mention your exposure to potentially cancer-causing additives like caramel coloring and aspartame.

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