



## 10 Diseases Linked To Soda

Statistics shows that Americans drink more soda than ever before. They account for more than 25 percent of all drinks consumed in the United States. More than 15 billion gallons were sold in 2000 -- about one 12-ounce can per day for every man, woman and child.

But here's some information that may keep you away from opening the can:

### 1. Extra pounds

Soda is a significant contributor to obesity. Drinking a single can a day of sugary drinks translates to more than a pound of weight gain every month. And diet soda is just as likely to cause weight gain as regular, or even more -- it may sound counterintuitive, but people who drink diet soft drinks actually don't lose weight. Artificial sweeteners induce a whole set of physiologic and hormonal responses that actually make you gain weight.

### 2. Liver damage

Soda damages your liver. Consumption of too many soft drinks puts you under increased risk for liver cirrhosis similar to the increased risk faced by chronic alcoholics.

### 3. Tooth decay

Soda dissolves tooth enamel. Soft drinks are responsible for doubling or tripling the incidence of tooth decay. Soda's acidity is even worse for teeth than the solid sugar found in candy.

### 4. Kidney stones and chronic kidney disease

Colas of all kinds are well known for their high phosphoric acid content, a substance that changes the urine in a way that promotes kidney stone formation. Drinking one quart (less than three 12-ounce cans) of soda per week may increase your risk of developing kidney stones by 15 percent.

### 5. Diabetes

Anything that promotes weight gain increases the risk of diabetes. Drinking soda also stresses your body's ability to process sugar. Some scientists now suspect that this may explain why the number of Americans with type 2 diabetes has tripled from 6.6 million in 1980 to 20.8 million today.

### 6. Heartburn & acid reflux

Heavy consumption of soda is a strong predictor of heartburn. Many carbonated beverages are very acidic. They also deliver a lot of air in the form of carbon dioxide, which can cause distension of your stomach. And that distension appears to be associated with more reflux.

### **7. Soft drinks = Soft Bones = Osteoporosis**

Soft drinks containing phosphoric acid are definitely linked to osteoporosis (a weakening of your skeletal structure) because they lead to lower calcium levels and higher phosphate levels in your blood. When phosphate levels are high and calcium levels are low, calcium is pulled out of your bones.

### **8. Hypertension (high blood pressure)**

Experts have reasons to believe that overconsumption of soda leads to an increase in blood pressure. It doesn't matter if the soda is regular or diet.

### **9. Heart disease**

Heavy soda drinkers are more likely to develop risk factors for heart disease. Research shows that drinking more than one soft drink a day is associated with an increased risk of developing metabolic syndrome -- a group of symptoms such as central obesity, elevated blood pressure, elevated fasting blood sugar, elevated fasting triglycerides, and low levels of HDL or "good" cholesterol. Having three or more of the symptoms increases your risk of developing diabetes and cardiovascular disease.

### **10. Impaired digestion (gastrointestinal distress)**

Gastrointestinal distress includes increased stomach acid levels requiring acid inhibitors, and moderate to severe gastric inflammation with possible stomach lining erosion. Drinking sodas, especially on an empty stomach, can upset the fragile acid-alkaline balance of your stomach and other gastric lining, creating a continuous acid environment. This prolonged acid environment can lead to inflammation of your stomach and duodenal lining.

## **Sources:**

» *Squidoo January 23, 2009*