

**PREVENTION BULLETIN  
NURSE'S OFFICE  
APRIL 2018**

Edison informs you...

### **Energy Drinks and their Effects on Health**

Energy drinks are drinks without alcohol containing stimulating substances that offer the consumer the avoidance or reduction of fatigue and exhaustion, in addition to increasing mental ability and providing an increase in physical endurance. The companies of energizing products are aimed at children and adolescents under 18.

These drinks differ from soft drinks and sports drinks. Soft drinks have a lower amount of caffeine. Sports drinks can contain vitamins, carbohydrates and sugar. Most energy drinks mention caffeine and vitamins as the main ingredients. This makes them look healthy and attractive, but it is false. These contain a large amount of stimulants such as:

- Guarana - An herb used to prevent fatigue and improve mental speed.
- Taurine - A supplement used to improve memory and endurance.
- Ginseng - An herb that is used to help reduce stress, strengthen muscles and improve endurance.
- Synephrine (bitter orange) - An herb used to promote weight loss.
- L-carnitine L-tartrate (LCLT) - A supplement used to increase energy, memory, and speed. It is also used to break down fat.
- Yerba mate - An herb used to prevent fatigue and improve mood.
- Ginkgo - An herb used to increase concentration and avoid fatigue.
- St. John's Wort - An herb used to reduce stress and improve mood.

A big problem with energy drinks is that there is little control by the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA). This means that many of the ingredients were not evaluated correctly. In addition, there are no laws on the labels of the products. So drinks may not mention the correct amount of caffeine.

Soft drinks have about 30 milligrams (mg) of caffeine per serving, coffee has about 100 mg per cup, and energy drinks can have 100 to 250 mg per serving.

The side effects of energy drinks differ depending on the person, the type of drink and the amount used. Reactions to them include:

- Headaches, stomach pains or diarrhea. These effects could be caused by lack of water or poor diet.
- Chest pain.
- Feelings of anxiety or nervousness.
- Dizziness or lack of concentration.
- Inability to fall asleep.
- Obesity. Energy drinks can be high in sugar and calories. They can cause weight gain or diabetes.
- Dental problems.

Some serious health problems can also occur due to the consumption of energy drinks, such as:

- Addiction and abstinence.
- High blood pressure.
- Convulsions.
- Heart problems. Many people report tachycardia. Its main use has been related to irregular heart rhythm or heart failure. Less frequent cases have been linked to death.

Children tend to be more sensitive to caffeine, which can be detrimental to their growth. People who have heart problems or asthma also have a higher risk.

You should be aware of these risks and talk with your children about them. Promote a healthy diet with rest and regular exercise. Energy drinks cannot be an option to consider, they can make children sick and unable to perform well.

Compiled from: <https://es.familydoctor.org/la-verdad-sobre-las-bebidas-energizantes/>

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