

Part 4, Chapter 41: Soft Drinks

Soft drinks are one of those inventions that the world would have been better off without. There's nothing redeeming about soft drinks. Authority Nutrition published an article titled "13 Ways That Sugary Soda is Bad For Your Health".^{1} It's a disastrous beverage. Still, it taste so good, right? One of the reasons it taste so good is because it's full of sugar—lots of processed sugar (which I'll get into shortly).

Soft drinks are right up there near the top of my list of 'foods' I never touch. It's also up there with hydrogenated oil, trans fat and aspartame. It's that lethal! From Authority Nutrition's list:

- 1 Sugary drinks do not make you feel full and are strongly linked to weight gain. Liquid sugar does not cause satiety in the same way as solid foods, making people eat more total calories. [In fact] sugar-sweetened beverages [and this includes beer by the way] may be the most fattening aspect of the modern diet.
- 2 Large amounts of sugar [in soft drinks] are turned into fat in the liver. Sucrose and high fructose corn syrup are about 50% fructose, which can only be metabolized by the liver. Excessive amounts may contribute to non-alcoholic fatty liver disease.
- 3 Sugar drastically increases belly fat accumulation. High consumption of fructose causes accumulation of visceral fat, the dangerous fat that leads to metabolic disease.
- 4 Sugary soda can cause insulin resistance, a key feature of metabolic syndrome.
- 5 Sugar-sweetened beverages may be the leading dietary cause of type 2 diabetes. There is a large body of evidence linking added sugar consumption, particularly from sugar-sweetened beverages, to type 2 diabetes.
- 6 Sugary soda contains no essential nutrients ... just sugar.
- 7 Some believe that sugar can cause leptin resistance [and this does seem to be the case]. Animal studies show that a high fructose diet can drive leptin resistance [up], but eliminating fructose reverses the problem.^{2}

Leptin is a hormone that is produced by the fat cells (adipose cells) in the body. Its main role is regulating how many calories we eat and burn, as well as how much fat we carry on our bodies.^{3} The sugar in soft drinks, and other foods, makes the body resistant to sensing leptin. In effect, we end up perpetually hungry. The only way to restore the body's natural balance, so that it recognizes leptin, is to cut out processed and high fructose corn syrup sugar.

- 8 Sugary soda can be downright addictive for a lot of people. Sugary drinks have powerful effects on the brain's reward system, which can cause addiction in susceptible individuals.
- 9 Numerous studies link sugar-sweetened beverages to heart disease risk.
- 10 Soda drinkers have a higher risk of cancer.
- 11 The sugar and acids in soda are a disaster for dental health. The acids in soda cause an acidic environment in the mouth, while the sugar feeds the harmful bacteria that reside there. This can have severe adverse effects on dental health.

Radiant Health and a Kinder, Gentler World

12 Soda drinkers have a drastically increased risk of gout. This is doubtless why beer is listed as a trigger for gout, too, because of the high sugar content.

13 Sugar consumption is linked to an increased risk of dementia.^{4}

Of this I have no doubt. My mother, who suffered from Alzheimer's disease was terribly addicted to sugar. In fact, we had to keep it out of her reach to keep her from overloading on it. For example: Candy of any sorts had to be seriously restricted. Finally, we stopped buying it and she stopped requesting it.

Authority Nutrition noted that "Soda contains acids like phosphoric acid and carbonic acid." It didn't mention what phosphoric acid does in your body. Specifically, it raises the pH of blood into an acidic range.

Soft drinks have long been suspected of leading to lower calcium levels and higher phosphate levels in the blood. When phosphate levels are high and calcium levels are low, calcium is pulled out of the bones. The phosphate content of soft drinks like Coca-Cola and Pepsi is very high, and they contain virtually no calcium [or potassium to replenish the calcium loss].^{5}

In addition to all the other damage caused, soft drinks, and other acidifying foods, increases the risk of osteoporosis, brittle bones.

The bottom line is that soft drinks are not real food. This is a very hard substance on the body and, in practical terms, soft drinks should **never** be consumed. They have virtually no redeeming value.