



HAVE A THINK ABOUT YOUR DRINK

BY: Sonal Ratan / DATE: December 2017

You're out at lunch with colleagues, friends or family. You scan the menu from front to back and find the healthiest meal option because you're trying to lose weight or just eat better. The waiter asks if she can take your drink order and without any hesitation, you ask for a soda. Did you know that depending on which soda you've ordered, you're about to consume up to 9 teaspoons of sugar in just one can?

National Nutrition Week is celebrated from the 9th to the 15th of October and this year the theme is 'Rethink Your Drink'. Since sodas are one of the most popular drinks worldwide, let's take a closer look at why you should 'Rethink Your Drink' when it comes to sodas.

SODA-LICIOUS BUT NOT NUTRITIOUS

Despite the cold, fizzy sensation they create in your mouth, sodas offer no nutritional benefits. Here are a few reasons why you should avoid them.

1. The frequency of obesity

Obesity is one of the top 5 risk factors for early death in South Africa¹. Almost 70% of women and 40% of men in the country, are either overweight or obese². This is not limited to adults. '1 in 4 girls and 1 in 5 boys - between the ages of 2 and 14 years - are overweight or obese'². Studies link a high intake of sodas, with increased energy intake and weight gain³. This is mainly due to their high sugar content.

In order to prevent and control non-communicable diseases and obesity, the national Department of Health introduced a sugar tax in April 2017. The aim of this was to reduce sugar intake from sugar sweetened beverages, such as sodas.

2. Cutting carbs but sodas do the harm

To lose weight you need to consume a healthy, balanced, calorie restricted diet, with the correct size portions of all food groups. In general, most people consume an excess of carbohydrates so you may hear them talking about 'cutting back on the carbs' to lose weight. But people tend to forget that sugar is also a form of carbohydrate. So, if you're ordering a grilled chicken salad for lunch but getting a soda with it, you could be consuming the equivalent of up to 3 slices of bread with your meal. Below is a breakdown of the number of teaspoons of sugar some of the most common sodas contain (3 teaspoons of sugar is the carbohydrate equivalent of 1 slice of bread).

							
							
							
							
							
							
							
							
							
7 teaspoons	7 teaspoons	7 teaspoons	8 teaspoons	8 teaspoons	8 teaspoons	8 teaspoons	9 teaspoons





The World Health Organization guidelines recommends that 'adults and children reduce their daily intake of free sugars to less than 10% of their total energy intake. A further reduction to below 5% or roughly 25 grams (6 teaspoons) per day would provide additional health benefits'⁴. Free sugars are those added to foods (e.g. 1 tablespoon of tomato sauce contains about 1 teaspoon of sugar) and drinks. This also includes sugars naturally present in honey, syrup, fruit juice and fruit juice concentrate. Consuming one can of soda will **not** provide any additional health benefits and on its own, that one can contains **more** than the total recommended daily sugar limit.

Nutritional insufficiency causing a deficiency

Studies reveal that the consumption of sugar sweetened beverages is inversely related to the intake of milk and calcium in both children and adults⁵. Consuming sufficient amounts of calcium is vital to build and maintain strong bones and teeth. Sodas are also high in phosphate. Consuming more phosphate than calcium can also have a harmful effect on bone health⁶.

Be sceptic especially if diabetic

People with diabetes should follow a healthy, balanced diet in order to control their blood glucose levels. Sodas do not form part of this type of diet due to their high sugar content. Uncontrolled diabetes can lead to a variety of conditions, some of which can be very serious. Studies reveal that people who consume sodas regularly, are at an increased risk for type 2 diabetes⁶. This is not only due to obesity but also an increased dietary glycaemic load, because sodas cause blood glucose levels to spike shortly after consumption⁷. Following a healthy, balanced diet which excludes sodas, can therefore reduce your risk for type 2 diabetes.

Don't doubt the risk of gout

Gout is a form of inflammatory arthritis. It is caused by elevated levels of uric acid in the blood. A 22-year-long study concluded that women who consumed a can of soda every day, had a 75% higher risk of developing gout than women who consumed sodas occasionally⁶. Similar risks were found with studies on men⁸.

Metabolic syndrome risk will make your change brisk

Metabolic syndrome is the name for risk factors that increase your risk for heart disease and other health issues, such as diabetes and stroke. Some of these risk factors include a large waistline, high triglyceride (a type of fat in the blood) levels, low HDL (good) cholesterol levels, high blood pressure and high fasting blood sugar⁹. Studies have revealed a positive association between the intake of sodas and metabolic syndrome⁷. This emphasizes the detrimental effect that soda consumption may have on your health.



Be wary of resultant dental caries

All sodas (including sugar-free options) are acidic, which means they can erode tooth enamel regardless of their sugar content⁷.

WHAT TO DRINK INSTEAD

It's usually readily available to drink, it saves you money and - most importantly - it's essential to your health. What is this amazing drink? **WATER!**

Tips to replace your current preferred drink choice with water:

- Unless you are concerned about the purity of the water in a certain area, save money and order normal tap water when you go out. You can ask for a slice of lemon in your water if you get tired of the taste.
- If you crave that fizzy sensation in your mouth, order a sparkling water. Remember to choose plain sparkling water and avoid flavoured waters. These can contain about 6-7 teaspoons of sugar per bottle.
- Give your water a natural flavour instead by adding slices of your favourite fruit and/or herbs and refrigerating overnight.
- Carry a water bottle with you wherever you go. This will ensure that you increase your fluid intake and avoid the temptation of buying a soda when you are thirsty.
- Craving something sweet? Freeze clementine pieces and use these as ice cubes. Sweet cravings can also be a sign of dehydration, so make sure that you are consuming sufficient amounts of water throughout the day.

CONCLUSION

It's easy to see that simple drink swops can make the world's difference when it comes to our health. Let's rethink our drink and choose water.



WHERE DOES FUTURELIFE® FIT IN?

Looking for a low GI, complete balanced drink? Look no further. We've combined the goodness of dairy with the greatness of FUTURELIFE® to bring you FUTURELIFE® Smart Drink™.

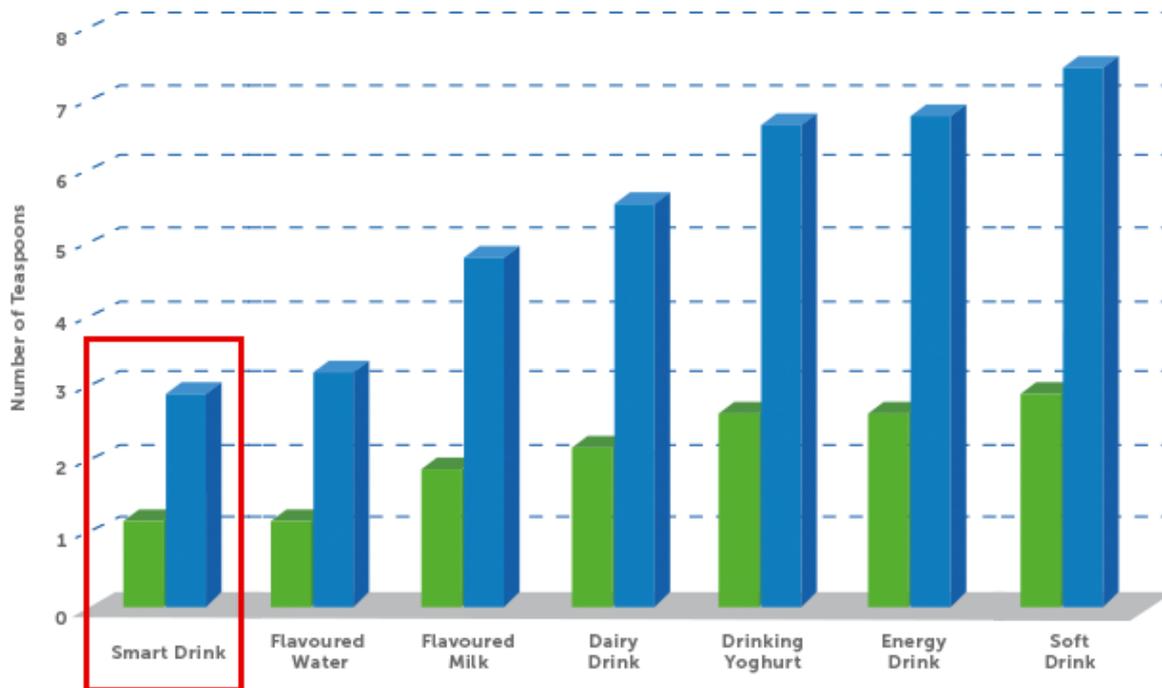


- Contains 50 essential nutrients.
- Free from most common occurring allergens.
- Contains a combination of carbohydrates and protein that can be ideally used as a post training recovery drink after endurance or strength training.
- Source of electrolytes.
- Available in 3 flavours: Milky Chocolate, Strawberry & Banana, Vanilla Caramel.

We compared the sugar content of FUTURELIFE® Smart Drink™ to different drinks. As seen below, we are proud to boast that FUTURELIFE® Smart Drink™ contains the least amount of naturally occurring and added sugar. This makes it an ideal beverage choice that can be enjoyed as a meal or snack throughout the day.

Per 100ml

Per 250ml



1 teaspoon = 4g of sugar.



REFERENCES:

1. <https://www.health-e.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/National-Strategy-for-prevention-and-Control-of-Obesity-4-August-latest.pdf>
2. <https://www.health-e.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/National-Strategy-for-prevention-and-Control-of-Obesity-4-August-latest.pdf>
3. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/17329656>
4. <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/news/releases/2015/sugar-guideline/en/>
5. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/16895873>
6. <https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource/healthy-drinks/soft-drinks-and-disease/>
7. <http://www.safpj.co.za/index.php/safpj/article/view/1650>
8. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2234536/>
9. <https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/health-topics/topics/ms>