



## HOW DRINKING SODA IMPACTS YOUR HEALTH

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Soda pairs almost too well with salty snacks to quench your thirst. The sweet taste is satisfying, and it is available almost anywhere you go. But the convenient option is not the healthiest option, so read about some of the biggest downfalls to consuming too much soda and challenge yourself to reach for an alternative next time you find yourself craving it.

### **SODA AND SUGAR**

The World Health Organization recommends consuming no more than 6 teaspoons of added sugar per day. A 12oz can of soda contains an average of 7-10 teaspoons of added sugar and drinks are sold in much larger sizes, so one sugary drink already exceeds that. The famous Big Gulp® from Seven Eleven is 32oz. When you drink these large quantities of soda, you consume a lot of sugar and calories that are not providing your body any nutrition or hydration.

### **SODA AND YOUR HEART**

Drinking too much soda impacts your heart health, most significantly because consuming the extra sugar and liquid calories almost

always leads to weight gain. Excess weight can raise your risk of developing heart disease, type 2 or gestational diabetes, and several cancers among other health problems. Maintaining a healthy weight takes diet, exercise, and discipline, but eliminating sugary drinks could be a great first step to losing weight and improving your heart health.

### **SODA AND YOUR TEETH**

We have all heard the warning of soda “rotting your teeth” from the dentist, and sugary drinks do in fact cause cavities. The sugar leaves sticky plaque that causes cavities on the surfaces of teeth. Sugar also interacts with the bacteria in your mouth and creates acids, which cause

erosion of the tooth enamel. When the enamel layer of a tooth is damaged, the whole tooth is more vulnerable to cavities and staining. If you drink soda, rinse your mouth with water afterwards to help prevent these reactions.

## **SODA ALTERNATIVES**

The good news is there are more alternatives to soda available than ever when you are struggling to eliminate the extra sugar from your diet. If you love a carbonated drink, sparkling water comes in any flavor. If it is the

sweetness you are looking for, squeezable flavor enhancers add a fruity kick to your water bottle. Iced teas come in almost any flavor with caffeinated and decaffeinated options. When you feel tempted by that Big Gulp®, challenge yourself to try one of these alternatives to soda for your overall health.

### References

1. [Get the Facts: Sugar-Sweetened Beverages and Consumption | Nutrition | CDC](#)
2. [The sweet danger of sugar - Harvard Health](#)
3. [WHO calls on countries to reduce sugars intake among adults and children](#)