

# Energy Drinks: What You Need To Know

## Energy Drinks

Energy drinks are beverages that claim to increase energy and alertness, improve athletic or mental performance, or provide other health benefits (such as heart or joint health).

## Common Ingredients

Caffeine is usually the main ingredient in energy drinks. Energy drinks may also have:

- sugar
- B vitamins
- herbs and plants (ginseng, guarana).

## Safety of Energy Drinks

It has not been proven that energy drinks are safe. Some ingredients may be harmful to your health. **Never mix energy drinks with alcohol. This can be very dangerous.**

Energy drinks are considered to be “supplements.” The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulates energy drinks but does not have to approve them before they are put on the market.

Manufacturers are responsible for making sure the products they produce:

- are safe
- have truthful claims on the label.

The FDA can remove a product from the market if they have evidence that the supplement is unsafe or that any claim on the label is false.

## What About Sugar?

Energy drinks can have a lot of sugar. Make sure to look at the nutrition label to find out how much sugar is in your drink.

## Who Should Avoid Energy Drinks

It is recommended for the following people to avoid drinking energy drinks:

- children and teenagers
- people who have trouble sleeping
- people who are pregnant or breastfeeding
- people who have high blood pressure or heart disease.

If you are taking any type of medicine, ask your health care provider if you should avoid energy drinks.

## Caffeine

Caffeine is usually the main ingredient in energy drinks. According to the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, most healthy adults can safely have 200 to 300 milligrams (mg) of caffeine each day.

Flip the page over to see how much caffeine is in your favorite drink.

**(over)**

## Benefits of Caffeine

Most energy drinks have a lot of caffeine. Caffeine may have health benefits if you have it in small amounts.

Caffeine may:

- increase energy and alertness
- improve concentration
- boost mood
- improve mental and athletic performance.



8-ounce  
energy drink

71 to  
286 mg  
caffeine



8-ounce  
brewed coffee

65 to  
150 mg  
caffeine



8-ounce brewed tea

10 to  
80 mg  
caffeine



8-ounce soda

25 to  
75 mg  
caffeine

Amount of caffeine in popular drinks. Caffeine is measured in milligrams (mg).

## Side Effects of Caffeine

Caffeine can be harmful if you have too much of it. Too much caffeine may cause:

- an increase in heart rate
- high blood pressure
- nausea (upset stomach)
- vomiting (throwing up)
- depression
- anxiety and nervousness
- problems sleeping
- frequent urination
- high blood glucose
- a decrease in bone density (bone mass).

## Whom to Call with Questions

Call your health care provider if you have questions about energy drinks or caffeine.