



To Your Health

WELCOA'S ONLINE GENERAL WELLNESS BULLETIN



& BODY WEIGHT

Overweight and obese adults who drink diet beverages take in more calories from solid foods—especially snacks—than those who drink sugary beverages, according to a new study. The findings raise questions about using diet drinks for weight control in heavier adults.

Excess weight can raise your risk for many health problems, including type 2 diabetes, cancer, and heart disease. Many people use diet drinks to help control their weight. But studies of how these beverages affect weight control have had mixed results.

To examine the link between diet drinks and calories, National Institutes of Health (NIH)-funded scientists looked at data on nearly 24,000 adults. The researchers found that about 10% of

healthy-weight adults drank diet beverages, compared to about 20% of over-weight and obese adults.

Healthy-weight adults who drank diet beverages ate less food and fewer total calories on a typical day than those who drank sugared beverages.

Among adults who were over-weight or obese, total calorie intake was similar between those who drank diet or sugary beverages. Heavier adults who drank diet beverages tended to eat more calories in the form of solid foods.

The Link Between Diet Drinks & Weight

Taking a look at solid-food intake, the scientists found that obese adults who

consumed diet drinks ate significantly more calories per day in salty snacks and sweet snacks than those who drank sugared beverages.

“The results suggest that overweight and obese adults looking to lose or maintain their weight—who have already made the switch from sugary to diet beverages—may need to look carefully at other components of their solid-food diet,” says study coauthor Dr. Sara N. Bleich at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health.

Future studies might test whether diet drinks help healthy-weight adults maintain their weight.

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Physical Activity & Your Health

Physical activity is any bodily movement produced by skeletal muscles; such movement results in an expenditure of energy. Physical activity is a critical component of energy balance, a term used to describe how weight, diet, and physical activity influence health, including cancer risk.

How is physical activity related to health?

Researchers have established that regular physical activity can improve health by:

- Helping to control weight.
- Maintaining healthy bones, muscles, and joints.
- Reducing the risk of developing high blood pressure and diabetes.
- Promoting psychological well-being.
- Reducing the risk of death from heart disease.
- Reducing the risk of premature death.

In addition to these health benefits, researchers are learning that physical activity can also affect the risk of cancer. There is convincing evidence that physical activity is associated with a reduced risk of cancers of the colon and breast. Several studies also have reported links between physical activity and a reduced risk of cancers of the prostate, lung, and lining of the uterus (endometrial cancer). Despite these health benefits, recent studies have shown that more than 50 percent of Americans do not engage in enough regular physical activity

How much physical activity do adults need?

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommend that adults “engage in moderate-intensity physical activity (like brisk walking) for at least 30 minutes on five or more days of the week,” or “engage in vigorous-intensity physical activity (like running or swimming) for at least 20 minutes on three or more days of the week”.

THE BENEFITS OF MOVEMENT

- Physical activity is a critical component of energy balance, the term researchers use to describe how weight, diet, and physical activity influence health.
- There is strong evidence that physical activity is associated with reduced risk of cancers of the colon and breast.
- Several studies have also reported links between physical activity and reduced risk of endometrial (lining of the uterus), lung, and prostate cancers.
- Current National Cancer Institute-funded studies are exploring the role of physical activity in cancer survivorship and quality of life, cancer risk, and the needs of populations at increased risk.