



Member Article - May 2015

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Increased Weight Gain Linked to Diet Soda

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Are you currently drinking diet soda or did you recently switch from regular soda in an attempt to aid weight loss? If so, you're more than likely getting the opposite effect from your diet soda drinking.

Despite Diet Coke's advertising of being a zero calorie drink, studies have linked diet soda intake to an increase in weight gain, not a decrease. A study published by the Journal of American Geriatrics Society looked at almost 1,000 patients over almost a nine-and-a-half year time span in order to understand the correlation between diet soda and weight gain.

The study focused on the direct relationship between drinking diet soda and waist circumference. In what turned out to be an important finding, the study concluded that increasing diet soda intake was, "associated with escalating abdominal obesity."

Weight loss aside, there is another hazard to drinking diet soda. Researchers concluded that regular diet soda consumption is actually dangerous for our health and potentially leads to a higher chance of heart disease, diabetes, or stroke, particularly in the elderly.

Over the many years of the study, researchers found that those who didn't drink

soda at all saw a 0.8 increase in their waistline, as opposed to 1.8 inch increase for occasional soda drinkers. Regular diet soda drinkers had the highest weight gain at 3 or more inches around their waist.

But if it's calories that lead to weight gain, why would this occur in a drink that has zero calories?

Calories aren't the only factors at play in diet sodas. Artificial sweeteners, including the seriously harmful sweetener aspartame, may have a large role. Aspartame, already known to be bad for our health, also encourages overeating by blocking certain receptors in the brain that would otherwise tell you that you're full.

Artificial sweeteners actually increase cravings which can lead to more frequent snacking throughout the day, and overeating at meals.

So if you're turning to diet soda in hopes to increase your weight loss, speak with your alternative healthcare practitioner to see what the best course of action is. As much as you can stick to less artificial drinks without fake sweeteners, the better weight loss you'll see.