Pouring sugar into Americans’ diets

- In 2011, beverage companies produced enough sugar drinks to provide an average of 45 gallons per American—or slightly more than nine 12-ounce cans a week.¹
- Sugar drinks were the single-largest source of calories in the American diet in 2010, providing an average of about seven percent of total calories per person.²
- Sugar drinks (sodas, fruit drinks, sports drinks, sweetened teas, energy drinks) accounted for 46 percent of all added sugars in the American diet in 2010.³

Sugar drinks significant in teens’ diets

- Soda, energy drinks, and sports drinks were the top source of calories in teens’ diets in 2006.⁴
- In 2013, 27 percent of teens drank one or more soda a day, 19 percent drank two or more, and 11 percent drank three or more.⁵
- From 2005 to 2008, American youth (ages 6–19) averaged 174 calories per day from sugar drinks—nearly nine percent of their daily calorie intake.⁶
- In 2008, five percent of children, 16 percent of adolescents, and 20 percent of young adults consumed more than 500 calories a day from sugar drinks—an amount equivalent to more than three 12-ounce cans.⁷

How much is too much?

- A typical 12-ounce can of regular cola contains 9 ½ teaspoons of added sugars; a 20-ounce bottle contains 16 teaspoons of sugars.⁸
- The American Heart Association (AHA) recommends a maximum daily intake of six teaspoons of added sugars for women and nine teaspoons for men.⁹,¹⁰
- In 2008, teenage boys consumed an average of 273 calories a day from sugar drinks, nearly twice the American Heart Association’s recommended consumption of added sugars from all sources.¹¹,¹²

Industry’s history of super-sizing

- The average soda sold in the United States has more than doubled in size since the 1950s, from 6.5 ounces to 16.2 ounces.¹³
- In 1955, a cup of Coca-Cola at McDonald’s was seven ounces. Today, a children’s size Coca-Cola at McDonald’s is 12 ounces.¹⁴
References

11. Ogden et al., 2011.