Facts on Health Risks of Sugar Drinks

Obesity

- The preponderance of scientific evidence shows that consumption of sugar drinks promotes weight gain.\(^1\)
- Beverages contribute to weight gain more than solid foods, because the body doesn’t compensate fully for beverage calories by reducing calorie intake later in the day.\(^2\)
- An extra soft drink a day increases a child’s risk of becoming obese by about 60 percent.\(^3\)
- Adults who drink one sugar drink or more per day are 27 percent more likely to be overweight or obese than non-drinkers, regardless of income or ethnicity.\(^4\)
- Obesity-related health care costs $190 billion annually, representing five to ten percent of all medical spending. Over 25 percent of these costs are paid through public expenditures.\(^5,6\)
- The medical costs for people who are obese are dramatically higher ($2,741 per year) than those of normal weight.\(^7\)

Diabetes

- People who consume sugar drinks regularly—one to two cans a day or more—have a 26 percent greater risk of developing type 2 diabetes than people who rarely consume such drinks.\(^8\) The risks are even greater for young adults and Asians.\(^9\)
- Diabetes is the seventh-leading cause of death in the U.S.\(^10\)
- Diabetes is a major cause of heart disease and stroke.\(^11\)
- According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, costs from diabetes totaled $245 billion in 2012, with direct medical costs totaling $176 billion.\(^12\)

Related Disease: Non-Alcoholic Fatty Liver Disease (NAFLD)

- After six months, daily consumption of sugar drinks increases fat deposits in the liver by 150 percent, which directly contributes to both diabetes and heart disease.\(^13\)

Tooth Decay

- Consumption of sugar drinks—especially more acidic carbonated drinks—promotes dental caries and erosion.\(^14,15,16,17,18\)
- Soda consumption nearly doubles the risk of dental caries in children\(^19\) and increases the likelihood of cavities in adults.\(^20\) Untreated caries can lead to pain, infection, and tooth loss.\(^21\)
Heart Disease

- Men who drink one can of a sugar drink per day have a 20 percent higher risk of having a heart attack or dying from a heart attack than men who rarely consume sugar drinks. A related study in women found a similar sugar drink–heart disease link.

References

7. Ibid.
11. Ibid.
12. Ibid.
21. Ibid.