

nutrition fact sheet



facts about sugar sweetened beverages

One in two people in Australia are currently exceeding the World Health Organisation sugar intake recommendations. Whilst this number has been decreasing over the past decade, sugar sweetened beverages continue to make up the single largest source of calories and added sugar in the Australian diet. Overconsumption of sugar sweetened beverages is associated with many negative health effects such as obesity, heart disease and diabetes. In this fact sheet, we explore what exactly sugar sweetened beverages are, the sugar content of popular beverages, and the effects that these can have on the body.

What are sugar sweetened beverages?

Sugar sweetened beverages are drinks that contain added sugar. This sugar can come in various forms such as raw sugar, honey, fructose and corn syrup, to name a few. Examples of some sugar sweetened beverages include:

- Soft drinks
- Sport Drinks
- Energy Drinks
- Slushies
- Iced Tea
- Cordial

Sugar recommendations

The World Health Organisation (WHO) recommends that added sugar intake should make up no more than 10% of total energy intake, with reducing your intake to 5% of total energy intake (or less) providing even more health benefits. This is equivalent to:

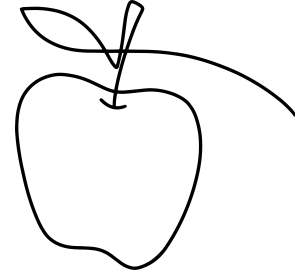
6 teaspoons (or 25g) of added sugar per day

Sugar content in popular beverages

The table below outlines the number of teaspoons of total sugar in common beverages.

Beverage	Teaspoons of sugar
McDonald's Frozen Coke (large size)	11 teaspoons
Classic Cottee's Cordial (250mL)	3 ½ teaspoons
Powerade Mountain Blast (600mL)	7 ½ teaspoons
Red Bull (250mL)	6 teaspoons
Coca-Cola (375mL)	9 teaspoons
7/11 Sour Apple Slurpee (large size)	10 ½ teaspoons
Lipton Peach Iced Tea (500mL)	7 ½ teaspoons

➤ Health effects associated with sweetened beverages



Increased risk of obesity, type two diabetes and heart disease - The high sugar content of these beverages can lead to weight gain and therefore increase the risk of chronic diseases.

Tooth decay and gum disease - Sugar contributes to the build up on plaque on the teeth and increases the risk of tooth decay. The acidity of these beverages can also erode tooth enamel, leading to gum disease.

Unstable blood sugar levels - This can lead to increased fatigue, difficulty in concentration and focusing.

Difficulty sleeping - Energy drinks contain high levels of caffeine and other stimulants that can be harmful to health. Caffeine can cause increased heart rate and nervousness. Consumption of high levels of caffeine can also lead to sleep disruption and restlessness.

➤ Summary

The majority of Australians are currently consuming too much sugar. The WHO recommends no more than 6 teaspoons of added sugar per day. Sweetened sugar beverages are the main source of sugar in the Australian diet, and over consumption can lead to weight gain, tooth decay and increased risk of diabetes and heart disease.

It is recommended to limit consumption of sugar sweetened beverages and choose water as your primary beverage.

Other suitable unsweetened beverages include:

- Milk
- Fruit flavoured water infusions
- Natural mineral water
- Unsweetened tea

For more information, please visit:

World Health Organisation - Guideline: Sugars Intake For Adults and Children

<https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789241549028>

Healthy Food Guide - How Much Sugar Is In That Drink?

<https://www.healthyfood.com/healthy-shopping/how-much-sugar-in-that-drink/>