

## Diet Sodas May Double Your Risk of Obesity

The prevalence of obesity has reached epidemic proportions and many Americans are making efforts to side-step extra calories. They are turning to diet soft drinks -- Diet Coke, Pepsi, Dr. Pepper and Sprite -- as their beverage of choice.

But is this a wise health choice?

Perhaps not, for according to a study by researchers at the University of Texas San Antonio, middle-aged adults who drink diet soft drinks may be drastically increasing their risks of gaining weight later on.



### Diet Soda Discovery

The study monitored the weight and soda-drinking habits of more than 600 normal-weight patients aged 25-64. When researchers followed up on the patients some eight years later, they discovered:

- Participants were 65 percent more likely to be overweight if they consumed one diet soda a day compared to if they drank none.
- Two or more low- or no-calorie soft drinks raised the odds of becoming obese or overweight even higher.
- Those who drank diet soda had a greater chance of becoming overweight than participants who drank regular soda.

### Finding Clarity

By itself, diet soda cannot be blamed for weight gain; however, various contributing factors may play a role.

For example, a person who drinks a diet soda may feel it's acceptable to make up for those calories with another high-calorie food. And while the tongue is temporarily satisfied by the sweet taste of diet soda, the brain isn't similarly fooled and still craves calories for energy. Other studies have suggested people who drink an artificially sweetened beverage before a meal will eat more high-calorie foods than those who do not.

Therefore, with diet soft drinks and sugar-sweetened beverages (even fruit juices) linked to weight gain and obesity, many people are left wondering, "What is safe to drink?" The answer, of course, is water.

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### Comment:

**Just like an optical illusion, what you see is not what you get.**

**Despite the superficial logic that consuming fewer calories will produce weight loss, the evidence is very clear that using artificial sweeteners will cause a paradoxical effect and actually cause you to gain weight.**

In fact, [nearly a decade ago](#), studies were already revealing that artificial sweeteners can:

- Stimulate your appetite.
- Increase carbohydrate cravings.
- Stimulate fat storage and weight gain.

These chemical cocktails may be a powerful contributing factor in the [obesity epidemic many industrialized nations are now experiencing](#). But, the damage artificially sweetened beverages and other foods can cause does not stop there.

While I am no fan of sugar, it has become abundantly clear to me that, when compared to artificial sweeteners, sugar is greatly preferred -- at least it is natural and you only need to be concerned with leptin and insulin regulation.

When using artificial sweeteners, you not only have the same insulin and leptin issues but you now must contend with the toxic effects of these artificial chemicals.

Artificial sweeteners like aspartame (NutraSweet®) and sucralose (Splenda®) can contribute to a host of additional side effects.

[Sucralose, the sweetening agent in Splenda®](#), is in fact made from sugar (sucrose). However, what the ads don't go on to say is that chemists then add three chlorine molecules to these sugar molecules to create the final product.

Animal studies have revealed that sucralose can cause:

- Shrunken thymus glands (up to 40 percent shrinkage)
- Enlarged liver and kidneys
- Atrophy of lymph follicles in the spleen and thymus
- Reduced growth rate
- Decreased red blood cell count
- Diarrhea

If these findings concern you, read on, because aspartame may be even worse.

Results of multiple studies, [complaints and testimonies](#) have revealed that aspartame can trigger or worsen the following diseases:

- Brain tumors
- Multiple sclerosis
- Epilepsy
- Chronic fatigue syndrome
- Parkinson's disease
- Alzheimer's disease
- Mental retardation
- Lymphoma
- Birth defects
- Fibromyalgia
- Diabetes