

ENERGY DRINKS AND YOUNG PEOPLE

WHAT IS AN ENERGY DRINK?

Energy drinks typically include ingredients to help 'boost energy' including sugar, caffeine, taurine and ginseng.

'Zero' or 'Diet' versions use sweeteners to reduce the calorie content, but maintain high levels of caffeine.

ENERGY DRINKS EFFECTS

PHYSICAL EFFECTS

Increased blood pressure, sleep disturbances, headaches and stomach aches, as well as injuries from hyperactivity.



MENTAL EFFECTS

Energy drinks can effect mental health and effects include sensation-seeking behaviour, self-destructive behaviour, insomnia, problems with behavioural regulation and poor lifestyle behaviours, such as poor diet.



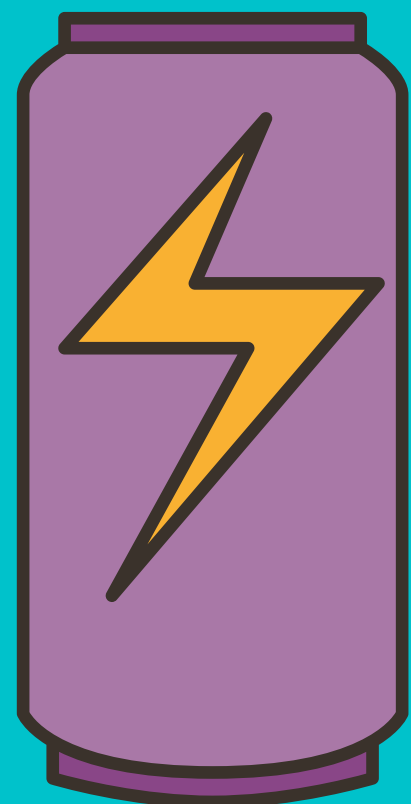
AMOUNT OF CAFFEINE IN ENERGY DRINKS

Typically energy drinks in the UK will contain 32mg of caffeine per 100ml. A small can (250ml) will contain 80mg and a large can (500ml) will contain 160mg of caffeine nearly the same as 2 cups of coffee.

READ THE LABELS

By law in the UK drinks that contain high levels of caffeine must include a warning on their labels:

"Not suitable for children, pregnant women and persons sensitive to caffeine."



HOW MUCH IS TOO MUCH?

Energy drinks are not recommended for under 16's.

The maximum safe amount of caffeine for children is 3mg/kg of bodyweight per day.

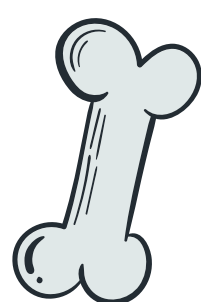
To work this out multiply weight in kilograms (kgs) with 3.

An Average 10 year old is around 30kg (4st 10lbs) therefore $30 \times 3\text{mg} = 90\text{mg}$ of caffeine is the maximum safe amount of caffeine per day.

A large energy drink (500ml can) typically contains 160mg of caffeine, nearly double the maximum safe amount for a 10 year old!



ENERGY DRINKS, BONES AND TEETH



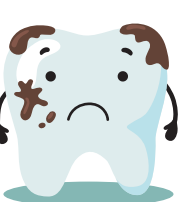
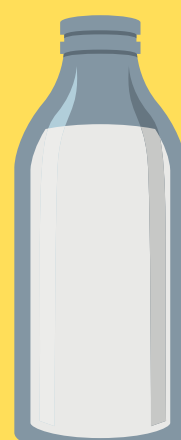
Childhood is when our bones grow the most and it is important to maximise their growth for bone health later in life. Caffeine can interfere with calcium absorption and therefore potentially effect bone health and increase risk of bone issues later in life.



HEALTHY DRINK OPTIONS

Drink plenty of water. Water is a healthy and cheap choice for quenching your thirst at any time. It has no calories and contains no sugars that can damage teeth.

Drink semi-skimmed, 1% fat or skimmed milk Milk is a good source of calcium, which helps build and maintain healthy bones. Milk also contains protein, vitamins, minerals, and does not cause tooth decay.



The sugar contained in some energy drinks can also contribute to increased risk of tooth decay.