[IMAGE]

Have a Heart: Stop Drinking Soda

By Editorial Staff

It's not enough that soft drinks and other sugar-sweetened beverages have been linked to cavities and <u>weight gain</u>, among other negative health consequences. Now comes a study that suggests high daily intake of soft drinks can elevate your risk of developing <u>heart disease</u>. According to the study, published in the research journal *Circulation*, a publication of the American Heart Association, study participants who drank the most sugar-sweetened beverages daily had a 20 percent higher risk of coronary heart disease compared to participants who drank the least. Coronary heart disease, also called coronary artery disease, is characterized by a narrowing of the small blood vessels that lead to the heart. The result: diminished blood and oxygen supply to the heart, which can cause chest pain, shortness of breath and even a heart attack.

<u>soda - Copyright â Stock Photo / Register Mark</u> By the way, if you think drinking *diet* soft drinks will get you out of the woods when it comes to health risks, think again: A recent study in the *Journal of General Internal Medicine* suggests that consuming <u>diet soft drinks</u> daily (versus none) increases your risk of suffering a vascular event, such as a stroke, heart attack or even vascular-related death, by a whopping 43 percent. So ditch the sodas and other sugary drinks and think natural and sugar-free: tea or the age-old standby, water.

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