

[IMAGE]

A Surprising Contributor to High Cholesterol

By Editorial Staff

Foods that contain cholesterol come to mind when we think of the primary contributors to high cholesterol: eggs, cheese, meat, etc. So why would we bring sugar-sweetened beverages into the conversation? Because recent research implicates this commonly consumed beverage category as well.

Published in the *Journal of the American Heart Association*, the study estimated beverage consumption based on food frequency questionnaires completed by more than 6,500 adults. Fasting plasma lipoprotein levels were measured and beverage intake separated into five categories.

Consuming more than one serving a day of sugar-sweetened beverages (high consumption), compared with less than one serving per month (low consumption) was associated with lower levels of high-density lipoprotein cholesterol (HDL; the "good" cholesterol) and higher levels of triglycerides (another type of blood lipid that is particularly dangerous when combined with low levels of HDL, as occurred in this study). Your doctor can tell you more about the dangers of high blood lipids such as cholesterol and triglycerides, and recommend dietary and lifestyle changes to help ensure you keep levels in the safe, healthy range.

Note: Low-calorie sweetened beverages and 100 percent fruit juice (up to 1.5 daily servings) did not appear to negatively impact lipoprotein levels, according to the researchers.

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