

[IMAGE]

Diet Drinks Cause Heart Issues?

By Editorial Staff

Think you can swap out your daily sugar-sweetened soft drinks with the diet variety and go on your merry, healthy way? Not so fast, suggests a growing body of research. Case in point: a long-term study that evaluated diet and sugary drink consumption by more than 100,000 adults.

Study participants completed 24-hour dietary recall questionnaires three times every six months, and researchers used the data to divide them into three groups for comparison based on consumption: nonusers, regular users or high users of both diet (containing artificial or natural sweeteners) and sugary beverages (soft drinks, fruit drinks and syrups containing at least 5 percent sugar, or 100 percent fruit juice).

Published in the *Journal of the American College of Cardiology*, the study found that during nearly a decade of follow-up after original data collection, high consumers of both diet and sugar-sweetened beverages were significantly more likely to suffer heart issues – specifically "stroke, transient ischemic attack, myocardial infarction, acute coronary syndrome [or] angioplasty" – compared to nonusers.

While the researchers emphasize that their findings only show an association, not a direct cause, it's certainly food (or drink) for thought when it comes to your beverage habits. Regular, diet or even too much 100 percent fruit juice (more than one 8 ounces of the latter per day) – it all adds up and may put your heart at risk.

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