

## **Energy drinks are not the best beverage choice for summer**

Red Bull and Monster dominate the energy drink market. Energy shots are also popular including 5-hour Energy and similar products. The main attraction is the caffeine in these drinks. An energy drink is defined as any beverage that acts as a physical and mental stimulant. They are popular with teenagers and young adults. They seem to be the perfect pick-me-up, yet health experts and organizations have cautioned against them. Below are the concerns.

Caffeine content is between 80 and 300 mg, depending on the product and size. Studies show that consuming up to 400 mg. daily by adults does not produce negative side effects. However, as little as 100 mg. can cause high blood pressure in children. Energy drinks have other stimulants, and many people consume more than one a day and may consume other caffeine sources including coffee and soda. Caffeine is dehydrating and may not be a good choice in hot weather and especially anyone who is physically active.

Other negative reactions to energy drinks can include dizziness, headaches, depression, nausea, vomiting and diarrhea. More serious side effects can include high blood pressure, high heart rate, hyperventilation, tremors, muscle contractions and even death.

Many energy drinks and shots are sold as dietary supplements and are not regulated by FDA. That means they may have ingredients in unsafe amounts or ones that have not been tested. For example, there is insufficient research to the safety of ginseng and taurine and other common additives to popular energy drinks and shots.

Energy drinks are dangerous when combined with alcohol. Both are diuretics and can increase dehydration and heart problems. When combined they can make a person believe they are sober and then are more likely to drink more, physical, and mental reactions and judgement may be impaired.

They can be a deadly combination with Adderall a medication used to treat ADHD. According to Dr. Barry Braun, head of Colorado State University department of Health and Exercise Sciences, Adderall is not intended to be taken with other stimulants such as those found in energy products. Adderall plus exercise, energy drinks and hot weather can be harmful. Dr. Braun's studies show that Adderall and exercise resulted in increased heart rate and high blood pressure when mixed with caffeine and hot weather and that can be dangerous.

If you are thinking about using energy drinks, limit them and consult your health care provider to make sure you do not have a medical condition that could worsen because of using them.

The best choice for summer beverages is water, tea, and sports drinks such as Gatorade. They do not have the high caffeine and stimulants that can affect you.

Source: Colorado State University Extension