



SEMPER SAFE



DANGERS OF ABUSING ENERGY DRINKS

Emergency room visits have doubled in the recent years due to energy drink abuse. In 42 percent of those visits to the hospital, were a direct result in the combination of energy drink and alcohol. Your drinks like Four Loko and Joose, are a direct result of the problem. In a recent study from 2007, the number of visits to the emergency room from energy drink abuse was about 10,000. By the end of 2011, that number has dramatically increased to a staggering 20,000 visits nationwide. Most of the patients were between the ages of 18 to 25. Energy drink abuse in the United States has become a very serious issue on high schools, college campuses, and many military installations. Energy drinks have no nutritional value, but they can only be harmful if abused or combined with another substance.

One 16 oz canned drink is equivalent to 2-3 cups of coffee. Energy drinks claim to provide people with increased energy levels that will keep them active & alert. Most energy drinks contain at least as much caffeine as a standard eight-ounce cup of coffee which is about 80mg. The amount of caffeine in energy drinks range from 75mg to 200mg per serving. This is compared to Coke having 34mg and Mountain Dew having 55mg of caffeine. The caffeine that is found in energy drinks is dangerous enough on its own. Not only is caffeine addictive, it acts as both a stimulant and a diuretic. As a diuretic, caffeine causes your kidneys to remove extra fluid from your body. If you consume energy drinks while sweating, these effects can be particularly dangerous because you can become severely dehydrated quickly. As a stimulant, caffeine can make you have anxiety attacks, cause seizures, heart palpitations, and cause insomnia.

Because of some serious intoxication incidents involving these drinks, several states and college campuses have banned alcoholic energy drinks like Four Loko and Joose. Like non-alcoholic energy drinks, it's important to have an accurate understanding of what's in these drinks:

- Most 23.5-ounce cans of Four Loko are 12% alcohol, which is the equivalent of 4-6 beers. (A standard beer is 12 ounces and 4-6% alcohol.) A 23.5-ounce can of Joose contains 10-12% alcohol.
- Four Loko has 135 milligrams of caffeine per 23.5-ounce can, and a can of Joose has 54 milligrams of caffeine. By comparison, an 8.3-ounce can of Red Bull has 76 milligrams, 8-ounces of Starbucks coffee has 180 milligrams, and a 12-ounce Coke has 35 milligrams.
- Four Loko also contains guarana, but it's unclear how much is in the drink. Phusion Projects, the maker of Four Loko, does not publish information about the amount of guarana in the drink.
- Unlike non-alcoholic energy drinks, alcoholic energy drinks do not have to print nutrition facts on the can, so you have much less information about what you're drinking.

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In addition to large doses of caffeine, energy drinks contain excessive amounts of sugar & legal herbal stimulants. Energy drinks are a deceptive combination of soft drink and pseudo-nutritional supplement and it is still unclear what effect those ingredients can have on your body.

Manufacturers of energy drinks are not required by law to list whether or not the herbs they use, have been sprayed with toxic pesticides, irradiated or watered with contaminated water supplies, so there is no telling what other toxins are contained in these drinks and whether or not these herbs will have a negative effect on the body.

Many people have started mixing energy drinks with alcohol because it makes them feel alert and energetic. Energy drinks mixed with alcohol will decrease the body's internal water supply and natural detoxification processes causing severe dehydration. Using energy drinks during exercise or other strenuous activity does nothing to provide the body with necessary nutrients or fluids and compounds the problem of dehydration.

Energy drinks, add more toxins to an already toxin burdened body, the bottom line concerning energy drinks is that medical professionals simply do not know the long-term effects of consuming these beverages.

Do's and Don'ts of energy drinks:

- **Do** drink more water to hydrate vice energy drinks
- **Don't** drink energy drinks to maintain a high level of alertness. Your body will eventually "crash" by abusing energy drinks.
- **Do** read labels carefully and research your product. Just because it taste good and provides short burst of energy does not mean it is good for you.
- **Don't** mix alcohol with energy drinks. The contents of energy drinks mixed with alcohol can confuse the body's system of balance and lead to hazardous results.
- **Don't** be fooled by "natural" energy drinks. Make sure you read the ingredients and that they are from an "herbal" derivative.

Remember!! Eat healthy, drink plenty of water and exercise regularly. Your body will perform when you need it most.

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