

# rethink sugary drink

## Key messages

- Sugar sweetened beverages are high in kilojoules, leading to weight gain and obesity.
- Obesity is a leading risk factor for diabetes, cardiovascular disease and some cancers (including endometrial, oesophageal, renal, gallbladder, bowel and postmenopausal breast cancers).
- Drinking sugar sweetened beverages can significantly contribute to tooth decay<sup>1</sup>.
- The World Health Organization, World Cancer Research Fund and Australian Dietary Guidelines all agree we need to limit the amount of sugar in our diets and recommend that sugary drink consumption be restricted<sup>2</sup> or avoided altogether.<sup>3</sup>
- Try replacing sugary drinks with water or reduced-fat milk.
- A regular 600ml bottle of soft drink contains about 16 teaspoons of sugar, and a regular 375ml can of soft drink contains about 10 teaspoons of sugar.
- Research has shown that consuming 340ml of sugary drink a day (which equates to less than one can) increases your risk of type 2 diabetes by 22% when compared to drinking one can a month or less.<sup>4</sup>
- Research shows that consuming one can of soft drink per day could lead to a weight gain of more than 5kg in one year, if you don't burn off the extra kilojoules.<sup>5</sup>
- For Victorian children, 39% consumed soft drink in the previous 24 hours. Diet drinks were one tenth of these soft drinks, with 4% of children consuming diet drinks<sup>6</sup>.

Key message: **About 40% of children drank soft drink in the past day.**

- In the 12 months to October 2012, Australians bought 1.28 billion litres of carbonated/still drinks with sugar, with regular cola drinks being the most popular (447 million litres).<sup>7</sup>
- Australian governments, schools, non-government organisations and others should take comprehensive action to encourage children and adults to reduce sugar-sweetened beverages consumption. Actions should include:

<sup>1</sup> Walsh et al. Black cola drinks, oral health and general health: an evidence based approach. ADA, 2008

[http://www.ada.org.au/app\\_cmslib/media/lib/0904/m163307\\_v1\\_m142700\\_v1\\_633613022505490000.pdf](http://www.ada.org.au/app_cmslib/media/lib/0904/m163307_v1_m142700_v1_633613022505490000.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> World Health Organization. *Diet, Nutrition and the Prevention of Chronic Diseases*. WHO Technical Report Series 916. Geneva 2003, page 68

<sup>3</sup> The World Cancer Research Fund and American Institute for Cancer Research. *Food Nutrition, Physical Activity and the Prevention of Cancer: a Global Perspective*. Washington DC, AICR. 2007

<sup>4</sup> The InterAct Consortium. Consumption of sweet beverages and type 2 diabetes incidence in European adults: results from EPIC-InterAct. *Diabetologia* PMID, 2013. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/23620057>

<sup>5</sup> Apovian CM. Sugar-sweetened soft drinks, obesity, and type 2 diabetes. *Journal of the American Medical Association* 2004; 292(8): 978–9.

<sup>6</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2015b, Customised report: Australian Health Survey, 2011-12, ABS, Canberra)

<sup>7</sup> Retail World December 2012.

- A social marketing campaign, supported by Australian governments, to highlight the health impacts of sugar-sweetened beverages consumption and encourage people to reduce their levels of consumption;
- An investigation by the federal Department of Treasury and Finance into tax options to increase the price of sugar-sweetened beverages relative to healthier options to change purchasing habits and achieve healthier diets.
- Comprehensive restrictions by Australian governments to reduce children's exposure to marketing of sugar-sweetened beverages, including through schools and children's sports, events and activities.
- Comprehensive mandatory restrictions by state governments on the sale of sugar-sweetened beverages (combined with an increase in the availability of free water) in all schools, government institutions, children's sports and events and places frequented by children, i.e. activity centres.
- Development of policies by state and local governments to reduce the availability of sugar-sweetened beverages in workplaces, government institutions, health care settings and other public places.
- Sugar sweetened beverages include all non-alcoholic water based beverages with added sugar such as non-diet soft drinks, energy drinks, fruit drinks, sports drinks and cordial.

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