

COKE & DIET COKE: THE FACTS & THE FICTION

A couple of infographics on the effects Coke and Diet Coke have on your body have recently gone viral. Unfortunately, whilst some of the information provided is correct, a lot of it is sensationalised, hyperbolic, or simply incorrect. Here, we sort the fact from the fiction to provide a clearer picture.

✓ NORMAL COKE DOES CONTAIN 10 TEASPOONS OF SUGAR



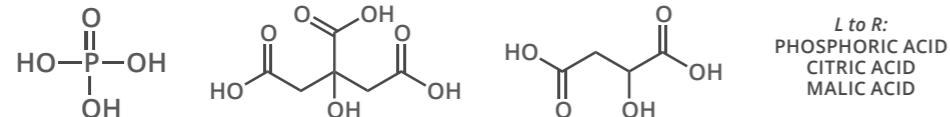
A can of Coke contains 33 grams of sugar, around 9-10 teaspoons. Whilst this is definitely a LOT of sugar, there's no recommended daily allowance – though the WHO suggests no more than 5% of total calories should come from added sugar.



✗ YOU WOULDN'T VOMIT IF NOT FOR THE PHOSPHORIC ACID

This claim is simply wrong. We're capable of drinking sweetened beverages with more than ten teaspoons of sugar, but no phosphoric acid, without vomiting.

✓ ACIDIC BEVERAGES CAN DAMAGE YOUR TOOTH ENAMEL



Drinking a lot of acidic beverages, like Coke, could cause damage to your tooth enamel over a long time. This isn't limited to the phosphoric acid in Coke; fruit juices, which contain citric and malic acids, can also cause erosion of tooth enamel.



✗ INSULIN SPIKES AREN'T THE MAIN CAUSE OF FAT PRODUCTION

The fat production that is associated with sweetened drinks results more from the metabolism of fructose in the liver than an increase in the production of insulin.

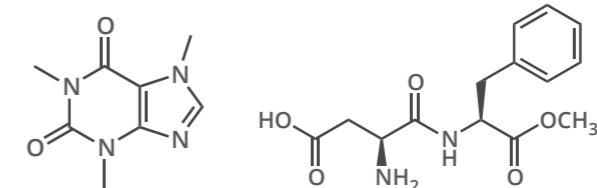
✗ CAFFEINE DOESN'T STIMULATE PRODUCTION OF DOPAMINE

Caffeine isn't directly involved in the production of dopamine, though it does help to block its reabsorption. There's no evidence that, at dietary levels, it affects parts of the brain involved in addiction and reward, unlike heroin and cocaine.

✓ CAFFEINE DOES HAVE A DIURETIC EFFECT IN THE BODY

Caffeine does increase urine output in doses equivalent to the amount found in 2-3 cups of coffee. However, it's possible to develop a tolerance to this effect, and it's much diminished in those who consume caffeinated beverages regularly.

✗ CAFFEINE & ASPARTAME ISN'T A 'POTENTIALLY DEADLY' COMBINATION



The study cited by the graphic doesn't even support this point. Aspartame is much maligned, but numerous reviews have found it to be perfectly safe at normal dietary levels. Of course, it's all about moderation – anything is 'potentially deadly' at a high enough dose, summed up by the phrase 'the dose makes the poison'.

✗ ASPARTAME DOESN'T 'TRICK' THE BODY INTO THINKING IT'S SUGAR

Aspartame tastes sweet, but doesn't induce the same response in the body as sugar does. It doesn't lead to the production of insulin, as stated in the graphic.

