

Dear Maria

What's wrong with fizzy drinks?

Have you ever looked at the information on the labels of fizzy drinks? Other than sugars most of the ingredients are chemicals. That's right, many fizzy drinks are just a collection of chemicals that give flavour and colour. Some fizzy drinks are marketed as energy drinks supposedly to pump you with energy, but this will just make your blood sugar soar then come crashing down, needing another boost.

Full of sugar and high in calories, causing obesity, they don't add any nutritional value. They are 'empty calories'. A calorie is a unit of energy potential. Standing alone a calorie is nothing: 1 kilocalorie is the amount of heat required to raise the temperature of 1 kilogram of water by 1 degree Celsius. The calorie must be part of your food so when you eat, the calorie gives itself as energy. An empty calorie does not come with any nutritional benefit, so for the body to use this energy potential, it must draw on its own nutritional reserves. This makes the calorie not only empty but very expensive for your body.

Fizzy drinks are carbonated drinks. Carbon dioxide is pumped into the liquid to make it fizzy, thus making an acid. If we breathe in oxygen and breathe out carbon dioxide, why put it back in? One well known fizzy drink is famed for cleaning toilets, old pennies and car batteries. Imagine what it does to you and your children's body and teeth!

Fruit juice is much healthier but should be diluted by 50%, reducing the sugar content even though it is natural sugar. In hot weather, drink plenty of water and eat juicy fruits to reduce sugar spikes, get the necessary fibre to keep blood sugar even, and feed your gut flora. All round best option.

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