

## WHY DO IT?

To finish an assignment...to study for an exam...to finish a project...to pull an all-nighter... to keep up with a social calendar...to drive through the night... because it tastes good. These are all reasons people give themselves as to why they may choose to consume energy drinks. It is also the reason over 20,000 people visit an emergency room and several people lose their lives each year.

In today's world of constant activity and motion, it is tempting to look for a quick energy fix to get through the next few hours. Beverage companies have developed and marketed hundreds of products, like drinks and candies, to provide customers with the energy boost they seek. However, the price of an energy drink can be more than the \$5 paid at the register.

## IMAGE IS NOT ALWAYS EVERYTHING

Energy drink marketers argue that they are not targeting youth, but the statistics don't support that. A 2010 study showed that youth exposure to TV ads for energy drinks increased by 22% for adolescents from 2008. Adolescents viewed 18% more energy drink ads than adults. Over half of the social media followers of popular brands are adolescents.

The ads promise the energy to get through the day, accomplish your goals, have a perfect body, and be the life of the party. However, they don't show the crash that comes from too much caffeine consumption or the dangers to your cardiovascular system when the brain cannot process the caffeine levels in your body.

Remember that advertisements are one-sided points of view meant to promote a product. The manufacturers of energy drinks use ads to get customers and will say anything to get people to buy their product.



**Over half of the social media followers of popular energy drink brands are adolescents.**

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

Go to [www.intheknowzone.com](http://www.intheknowzone.com) for more information on substance abuse. Increase your knowledge using the information, statistics, images, and links. Test your understanding with a quick quiz.

**Don't stay in the dark.  
Get In the Know!**

**in the know**

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**ENERGY DRINKS**  
*emergency overload*



## WHAT CAFFEINE DOES

Caffeine is a natural substance that is enhanced in many of the foods and beverages we consume each day. It is nearly impossible to avoid consuming some level of caffeine. Even products labeled as “decaffeinated” contain small traces of caffeine.

Caffeine is a stimulant and it blocks the effects of adenosine, a brain chemical that is involved with the act of sleeping. Without the right levels of adenosine, the brain works in a state of emergency and creates high levels of adrenaline, which have dangerous effects on the body. The danger with caffeine is that a user risks the development of caffeinism. This is the act of consuming toxic levels of caffeine.



*addiction*

## Side Effects of Caffeine

Increased Heart Rate  
High Blood Pressure  
Fainting  
Dehydration  
Heart Palpitations

Insomnia  
Rapid Breathing  
Addiction  
Sudden Death



## HOW MUCH CAFFEINE IS IN AN ENERGY DRINK?

The FDA limits beverage companies to 71 mg of caffeine in a 12-ounce soda can. Energy drinks are marketed as diet supplements, so they are not bound to this rule. The rule exists because caffeine is a dangerous substance when consumed in large quantities. It is a stimulant, causing an increase in heart rate, dehydration, palpitations and a rise in blood pressure if you have too much in your system.

While manufacturers of energy drinks will tell you that their caffeine levels are no worse than a cup of coffee, they are not required to put caffeine content in the nutritional information. A recent study of several energy drinks found that of the few energy drink labels which actually advertise the caffeine levels, many of them listed the level as low as 20% below the actual amount.

On average, an energy drink contains as much caffeine as seven 12-ounce sodas or five 8-ounce cups of coffee. If a person averages

two energy drinks a day, that can amount to a lot of caffeine, and a possible trip to the emergency room.

## DEVELOPING MINDS

There is never any good reason for an adolescent to have an energy drink. Studies have proven that caffeine adversely affects the development of young people. If you feel like you need an energy drink to get through schoolwork or extra-curriculars, you should consider eliminating unnecessary projects and activities.

Rest is critical to everyone, but even more essential to developing brains. Studies have shown that deep sleep is linked to the release of growth hormones and the production and breakdown of proteins, the building blocks for cell growth. Adolescents

*insomnia*

who consume excessive amounts of caffeine are not able to fully rest and develop effectively.

## MIXING SUBSTANCES

Of the over 20,000 ER visits related to energy drinks each year, 42% of the patients reported mixing the drink with alcohol or a stimulant such as Adderall. When the brain is over-producing energy from a stimulant, adding a depressant, like alcohol, which slows brain function, can cause the drinker to be unaware of the danger their body is in.

People are more likely to make dangerous decisions based on a false sense of safety. Since both caffeine and alcohol are diuretics, severe dehydration can occur. Mixing substances is never a good idea, and can wreak havoc on your body.

## MAKE HEALTHY CHOICES

While energy drinks may offer a quick boost to finish one more task, they pose a dangerous risk to your health. Avoid resorting to energy drinks and find healthier ways to accomplish your daily goals.

*heart palpitations*

**Rest is critical to everyone, but even more essential to developing brains.**

