



Tips for Parents: Kids and Energy Drinks

Is your tween or teen begging for energy drinks such as Monster, Rockstar, Redbull, or other similar beverages? While these might look harmless, pediatricians say they contain stimulants that can be dangerous for growing kids.

Energy Drinks are for Adults

With their colorful labels and exciting names, energy drinks appeal to kids. They've become a new way for kids to brag to one another: "My mom lets me drink Monsters." But these drinks contain stimulants such as caffeine, taurine, and guarana—in amounts that can make even adults jittery or sick.

A new [report on energy and sports drinks from the American Academy of Pediatrics](#) details how inappropriate these beverages can be for kids. Marcie Beth Schneider, MD, FAAP, a member of the AAP Committee on Nutrition and co-author of the report says, "There is a lot of confusion about sports drinks and energy drinks, and adolescents are often unaware of the differences in these products. Some kids are drinking energy drinks – containing large amounts of caffeine – when their goal is simply to rehydrate after exercise. This means they are ingesting large amounts of caffeine and other stimulants, which can be dangerous. Some cans or bottles of energy drinks can have more than 500 mg of caffeine, which is the equivalent of 14 cans of soda."

The dangers of stimulants to kids include increased heart rate, blood pressure, sleep disturbances, increased anxiety and even death.

Sports Drinks are Usually Unnecessary

The report goes on to say that most kids and teens don't need sports drinks for regular exercise. They are only appropriate when kids are in prolonged, extremely vigorous physical activity. Some drawbacks of unnecessary consumption of sports drinks include:

- Increased calories leading to obesity
- Increased sugar intake leading to diabetes
- Tooth decay

Water is Best

Water before, during and after exercise is typically the best way to keep kids hydrated. Healthy intake of 100% fruit juice and low-fat milk during meals is also recommended in the report.

For more information:

[Sports Drinks and Energy Drinks for Children and Adolescents: Are They Appropriate?](#)
[Kids should not Consume Energy Drinks and Rarely Need Sports Drinks Says AAP](#)

You may also find these related Tips for Parents helpful:

[Tips for Parents: Kids' Sports Safety](#)

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