

# “FOOD FOR THOUGHT”

## Energy Drinks

Energy drinks are an increasingly popular trend first introduced by a major US beverage company in the mid 1980’s. Product development has resulted in an extensive selection available on the market today with more than 500 new varieties created in 2006.

Energy drinks advertise alertness, endurance, and weight loss as a benefit of consumption. Desirable side affects are promoted by the manufacturer and the suggested link is with the beverages main ingredients: caffeine, sugar, artificial sweeteners, herbal supplements, and vitamins.



Mixing energy drinks with alcohol is also common among the younger generation. The fusion is enticing to some because it provides the illusion of intoxication with less fatigue. However, combining the two has been associated with increased engagement with risky behavior and negative consequences.

Excessive consumption of caffeine (amounts greater than 400 mg) have been linked to nervousness, irritability, sleeplessness, increased urination, abnormal heart rhythms, and upset stomach. Unlike pharmaceuticals, the FDA does not currently require a food item to list the amount of caffeine it contains on the product label.

Product	Caffeine (Per Serving)
Red Bull (330ml)	80 mg
Diet Coke	31 mg
Mountain Dew	37 mg
Regular Coffee	110 mg
Cappuccino (6 oz)	90 mg
Iced Tea	25 mg
NoDoz (1 Regular Strength)	100 mg
Excedrin (2 Max. Strength)	130 mg
Dexatrim (1 Tablet)	200 mg

Over sixty percent of energy drink consumers are between the ages of 13 and 35. High school and college students have reported using energy drinks as a means to stay awake longer in order to study or finish an assignment.