



SAFETY UNLIMITED, INC.

# Weekly Safety Meeting

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## Dangers of Energy Drinks

Caffeine is commonly used in today's society to get more energy or to feel more alert. While coffee has been around for hundreds of years and is still the most common caffeinated drink in the world, energy drinks have been gaining in popularity over the past few decades.

### Energy Drink Hazards:

Overconsumption of caffeine and other energy producing ingredients found in energy drinks such as taurine can lead to health issues.

In a study published by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, emergency room visits due to energy drinks doubled from 10,000 visits in 2007 to over 20,000 visits in 2011.

Another study focused on cases that involved heart abnormalities like irregular heartbeat, while some documented neurological problems like seizures. According to the researcher, "Animal studies have shown that caffeine and taurine, both common energy drink ingredients, intensify each other's effects. That may cause calcium to build up in the heart cells, which can cause those vessels to constrict."

Recently, a South Carolina high school student collapsed and died after consuming a very high dose of caffeine in a short time: coffee, soft drinks and an energy drink. The coroner reported that the student died from a caffeine-induced lethal cardiac arrhythmia.

### Safety:

- Large amounts of caffeine may cause serious heart and blood vessel problems such as heart rhythm disturbances and increases in heart rate and blood pressure. Caffeine also may harm a child's still developing cardiovascular and nervous systems;
- Caffeine use may also be associated with anxiety, sleep problems, digestive problems, and dehydration;
- Guarana, commonly included in energy drinks, contains caffeine. Therefore, the addition of guarana increases the drink's total caffeine content;
- People who combine caffeinated drinks with alcohol may not be able to tell how intoxicated they are; they may feel less intoxicated than they would if they had not consumed caffeine, but their motor coordination and reaction time may be just as impaired;
- Excessive energy drink consumption may disrupt teens' sleep patterns and may be associated with increased risk-taking behavior; and

- A single 16-oz. container of an energy drink may contain 54 to 62 grams of added sugar; this exceeds the maximum amount of added sugars recommended for an entire day.

### **Considerations Before Drinking Energy Drinks:**

While the levels of the above energy drinks are well under the 400mg mark, there are other considerations you must take into account.

- Know the content of caffeine from other sources such as coffee or soda that you may be drinking during the day.
- Know your limit when it comes to caffeine. Some people are more sensitive to it than others.
- Consider what kind of work you will be doing. Intense labor work can already be putting a strain on your heart and body before adding in an energy drink.
- Consider your working environment. Drinking energy drinks before working in a hot or stressful working environment may not be the best choice.

### **Summary:**

Be aware of what you are putting into your body. While all experts do not condemn drinking energy drinks, most recommend consuming no more than one per day. Energy drinks can have negative side effects and put you more at risk for heart troubles especially for those working intense labor jobs or in stressful work environments.

**YOUR GOOD HEALTH IS YOUR GREATEST WEALTH!!**



