

POISON ANTIDOTE



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ENERGY DRINKS

What are Energy Drinks?

Energy drinks are increasing in popularity especially among youth. Energy drinks are sold under names such as; Full Throttle®, Monster®, Rock Star®, Amp®, and Redline®. Most energy drinks contain large amounts of both caffeine and sugar along with a combination of legal stimulants and supplements such as taurine, guarana, and ginseng. Many energy drinks do not list the amount of each ingredient on the label which makes it difficult to know exactly how much it contains.



Energy Drinks vs. Sports Drinks

There is some confusion among consumers on the difference between energy drinks and sports drinks. Sports drinks such as Gatorade® or Powerade® are designed to re-hydrate the body while energy drinks can produce the opposite effect. It is important to note that new energy drinks are frequently hitting the store shelves and some are now being marketed as sports drinks. Also, always read the label before purchasing.

What are the Dangers?

Many people mistakenly think of caffeine as a food rather than a drug. Caffeine is a diuretic drug; therefore large doses can be very dehydrating. This can pose a problem for those consuming energy drinks while participating in sports, or during or after exercise. Excessive caffeine use can produce symptoms such as upset stomach, heart palpitations, sweating, tremors, vomiting, delirium, headache, diarrhea, and chest pains. Some energy drinks now contain alcohol. While these are supposed to be regulated as alcoholic beverages, they are frequently on the store shelves next to the non-alcoholic brands. This can cause confusion not only for consumers, but also for store clerks who may sell the product without realizing it contains alcohol. Another danger exists when energy drinks are mixed with other caffeine containing products, or when they are mixed with alcohol. Using stimulants can mask the effects of alcohol, therefore increasing the possibility of consuming excess amounts of alcoholic beverages.

Minimizing Risk

Be aware of what you are putting into your body. There are alternatives to consuming energy drinks. Eating carbohydrates such as fruit, vegetables, cereal and whole-grain breads can increase energy. Recent studies have shown that an alternative to sports drinks is the consumption of low-fat milk following exercise. It was shown to be an effective source of rehydration. While many energy drinks are not necessarily harmful if consumed in small amounts, they do make claims that can be misleading. Think of energy drinks as what they really are; highly concentrated sugary, caffeinated drinks that should be consumed with caution.

If you have any questions or concerns call the Utah Poison Control Center 1-800-222-1222.



HAND SANITIZERS

Recent media coverage has drawn attention to the high concentrations of ethanol in hand sanitizers. Email hoaxes have surfaced suggesting children may get drunk from licking their hands after application. This is not true. However, common hand sanitizers contain ethanol in concentrations greater than strong alcoholic beverages. The following are important notes about hand sanitizers:

- Hand sanitizers are effective means to reduce illnesses when used according to the directions.
- A lick or a taste of a hand sanitizer gel is not likely to produce any adverse effect.
- Keep hand sanitizer gel and other ethanol containing products (mouthwash, perfumes, body splashes, and hairspray) out of reach of small children.
- Supervise the use of hand sanitizer gel.
- Older children may attempt to abuse products containing ethanol like hand sanitizer gels.
- Call the Utah Poison Control Center if you have any concerns at 1-800-222-1222.



Visit our Website: www.utahpoisoncontrol.org
In response to our education survey, age specific lesson plans are now available on our website for elementary school children. The *Household Guide to Poisons* is also available on the website to copy and distribute as part of any poison prevention lesson. The UPCC is continually working to add more age specific lesson plans and resources for poison prevention education.