

# Kid's consumption of sugared beverages linked to higher caloric intake of food

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A new study from the Department of Nutrition, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill reports that sugar-sweetened beverages (SSBs) are primarily responsible for higher caloric intakes of children that consume SSBs as compared to children that do not (on a given day). In addition, SSB consumption is also associated with higher intake of unhealthy foods. The results are published in the *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*.

Over the past 20 years, consumption of SSBs—sweetened sodas, [fruit drinks](#), [sports drinks](#), and [energy drinks](#)—has risen, causing concern because higher consumption of SSBs is associated with high caloric intakes. Until recently it was unclear what portion of the diet was responsible for the higher caloric intakes of SSB consumers.

"The primary aims of our study," said lead investigator Kevin Mathias of the Department of Nutrition, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, "were to determine the extent to which SSBs contribute to higher caloric intake of SSB consumers and to identify food and beverage groups from the overall diet that are associated with increased SSB consumption."

Culling data from the 2003-2010 What We Eat in America, National Health and Nutrition Examination Surveys, investigators analyzed a sample of 10,955 children ages 2 to 18, and reported results for three separate age groups: 2-5, 6-11, and 12-18 year olds. Results showed that while intake of food increased, intake of non-sweetened beverages decreased with higher consumption of SSBs. By examining both food and non-sweetened beverages the authors were able to conclude that SSBs are primarily responsible for higher caloric intakes among 2-5 and 6-11 year olds. A similar finding was observed among children aged 12

**More information:** "Foods and Beverages Associated with Higher Intake of Sugar-Sweetened Beverages," by Kevin C. Mathias, MS; Meghan M. Slining, PhD, MPH; and Barry M. Popkin, PhD (DOI: [dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.amepre.2012.11.036](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.amepre.2012.11.036)). It appears in the *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, Volume 44, Issue 4 (April 2013).

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