



## The Soft-Drink Hype

America is powered by carbonated soft drinks. Americans guzzle soda pop at a rate of 42 gallons per year. That's an average of 486.2 cans a year for every man, woman, and child.

Americans drink more soda than any other beverage, including water. Americans choose regular and diet cola 69 percent of the time. Lemon-lime sodas come in at a distant second.

What's wrong with drinking soda? That can be answered in just one word – sugar! One ounce of soda contains about three grams of sugar. Although sugar can provide quick energy, the calories in sugar are “empty” calories. You have to eat more food at other



meals to make up for the nourishment that the sugar in soda pop lacks. That can add inches to your waistline.

Source: [www.topica.com/tipworld](http://www.topica.com/tipworld)

## Bottled Water

Last year, Americans drank more than 300 million gallons of bottled water. Bottled water has certainly gained popularity as a low-calorie substitute for soft drinks. Some consumer reports, however, have shown that bottled water isn't necessarily any healthier than some city municipal water. Tap water can sometimes be just as healthy as bottled water.

Bottled waters go by many different names. Do you get confused with the many varieties of just plain water? Here are some of their names with a brief explanation:

- ☞ Mineral water: usually contains sodium, magnesium, and calcium, and usually is carbonated.
- ☞ Sparkling water: carbonated water in which the gases are dissolved in the water and captured before they can escape, resulting in the fizz.
- ☞ Club soda: artificially carbonated tap water to which minerals have been added.
- ☞ Seltzer: artificially carbonated tap water that is frequently flavored and/or sweetened, making it high in calories.

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## Percolating Evidence

If Americans suddenly gave up drinking coffee, a lot of mornings would start off with a whimper instead of a bang. In fact, a few years ago, heavy coffee drinkers were urged to cut back. Evidence has shown that heavy coffee drinkers suffer more from irregular heartbeats, breast cysts, and bladder cancer.

Moderate use of coffee has been cleared as a health threat. But even moderate consumers should be wise to the following:

- ☞ Drinking more than four cups of coffee a day can cause “caffeinism,” a disorder easily mistaken for anxiety neurosis.
- ☞ Most adults can handle three cups of coffee, which contain about 100 milligrams of caffeine, without experiencing such adverse side effects as diarrhea, headache, heartburn, palpitations, nervousness, or insomnia.

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## The Skinny on Skim Milk

Perhaps because it's one of our first foods, we regard milk as one of the healthiest. But whole cow's milk doesn't always make the human heart healthier. It's rich in saturated fat, the kind that clogs arteries and causes heart disease.

Whole milk contains only four percent fat. But that measurement is by weight. The true, meaningful measurement of fat is actually the percentage of calories from fat, and 48 percent of the calories in milk come from fat. That makes it a fattier food than many cuts of beef. Low-fat or two-percent milk is not much leaner. Luckily, there is another choice – skim milk.

Skim milk has only five percent of its calories from fat. Fortified skim milk



contains as much calcium, vitamin D, and vitamin A as whole milk, yet without the saturated fat.

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## Healing Foods

Some foods can actually heal the body. Here are some recognized foods with healing potential:

- ☞ Broccoli – a good source of fiber and beta-carotene and also a good source of vitamin C, the cancer-fighting antioxidant
- ☞ Pectin-rich foods such as apples, grapefruit, and oranges – shown to reduce blood cholesterol levels
- ☞ Oats – an excellent source of fiber that significantly impacts cholesterol levels
- ☞ Peppers – incredibly high in vitamin C
- ☞ Potatoes – good sources of vitamin C. Sweet potatoes are high in beta-carotene.
- ☞ Garlic and onions – have the ability to lower blood cholesterol levels
- ☞ Low-fat yogurt – good, low-fat source of calcium
- ☞ Leafy, dark green vegetables – high in beta-carotene and have significant amounts of iron and fiber
- ☞ Soybeans and soy products – good source of protein, soluble fiber, and B-complex vitamins. Soybeans have been shown to help cells in a pre-cancerous stage revert to normal.

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