

Can over-consumption of sugary drinks increase the risk of having severe COVID? Here's how that may happen.

The types of sugars used in these drinks can cause metabolic changes in the body,^{2,3} such as:

- Adverse lipid parameters (bad levels of fat)
- Elevated blood glucose (blood sugar) and insulin resistance
- Chronic inflammation
- Elevated uric acid

In turn, these metabolic changes are risk factors for chronic conditions including:

- Type 2 diabetes⁴
- Hypertension (high blood pressure)⁵
- Cardiovascular (heart) disease⁶
- Obesity⁷

Studies of patients^{8,9} show that these chronic conditions increase the chance of having severe COVID, that can lead to:

- Hospitalization
- Longer hospital stay
- ICU care
- Death

Cutting sugary drink consumption can significantly improve metabolic markers of these conditions in as little as 14 days¹

Low-income people and people of color are disproportionately impacted by COVID because they are:

- More likely to be frequent consumers of sugary drinks¹⁰
- More likely to contract COVID through jobs and housing¹¹
- Less likely to have good access to healthcare¹²



Added sugars are harmful to health. Sugary drinks are the top source of added sugars in the American diet.¹³ The types of sugars used in these beverages harm health even more than do the sugars in foods.¹⁴

The University of California Research Consortium on Beverages and Health includes faculty from every UC campus working to provide California legislators and communities with the science base for policy to decrease consumption of sugary drinks and increase consumption of water and other healthy beverages.

University of California Research Consortium on Beverages and Health • Bringing Science to Policy

• Find our entire factsheet series at <https://npi.ucanr.edu/Resources/UCRCBH/> • For more information contact: ceahecht@ucanr.edu •

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Image

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