

# Drinking Our Way to Obesity

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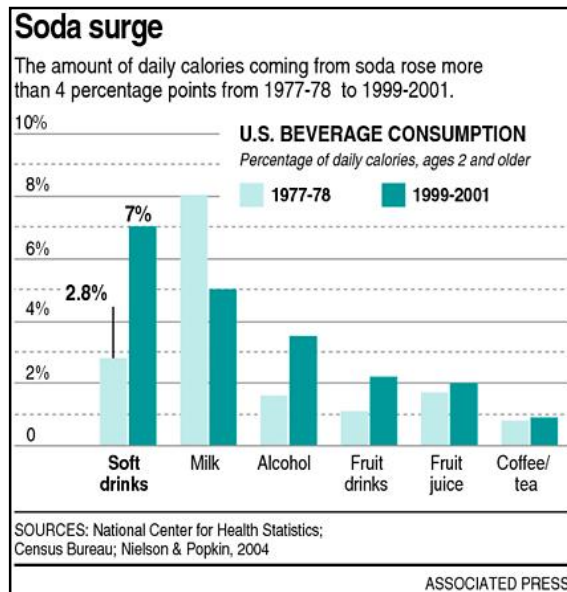
**According to an analysis of national surveys**, the number of calories from beverages has nearly doubled since 1960 – increasing from 12% (1965) to 21% (2002). Why are we drinking so many more calories?

- **The surge in soft drink consumption.** In 2007, carbonated soft drinks topped the list of all packaged goods purchased in the US with total sales of \$17.6 billion (refrigerated milk came in second to soft drinks, with sales of \$12.8 billion). *Note that while soft drinks are the main source of calories, other contributors include alcoholic beverages, fruit juice, and fruit-juice drinks.*
- **The portion size of beverages.** Twenty years ago a soda was 6.5 oz and contained 85 calories. Now we're commonly served 20 oz sodas that contain a whopping 250 calories! *Test your portion IQ – take the National Institutes of Health [Portion Distortion Quiz](#).*

**Why all the fuss?** According to the research, we don't balance increased calories from beverages by taking in fewer calories from food or increasing physical activity. This increase in calories, over the long run, can lead to weight gain – and is likely one of the factors contributing to the obesity epidemic.

**If you'd like to cut back** on your soft drink consumption, here are some alternatives to stock up on:

- ✓ **Milk or fortified soy milk.** You'll boost your intake of protein, calcium and vitamin D.
- ✓ **Good ol' H<sub>2</sub>O.** If drinking plain water bores you, add flavor such as a sprig of mint or a slice of orange.
- ✓ **Green or black tea.** Tea is a healthy alternative to water for people who prefer flavored beverages. Tea is calorie free and contains powerful phytochemicals (antioxidants). If you're cutting back on caffeine, look for caffeine-free teas.
- ✓ **Think outside the juice box.** Although 100% fruit or vegetable juice contains important nutrients, they also contain plenty of calories (about 100/cup). Try to limit juice intake to no more than 4oz a day or cut calories by making a homemade juice spritzer: Combine one or two parts seltzer, mineral water, or club soda with one part 100% fruit juice.
- ✓ **Coffee.** If you're a coffee drinker, keep it low-calorie by skipping the syrups, whipped cream, and whole milk. If you're cutting back on caffeine, select caffeine-free coffee drinks.



## How are those New Year's Resolutions going?

For a fun way to increase physical activity, get a team together and register for Shape Up Montana ([www.shapeupmontana.org](http://www.shapeupmontana.org)). This interactive three-month team competition offers beginner, intermediate, experienced and professional divisions. There's even a youth component of Shape Up Montana – go to [www.bigskyfitkids.org](http://www.bigskyfitkids.org) to register or get more information.

## Adapted from:

Consumer trends research <http://www.foodnavigator-usa.com/news/ng.asp?n=82018&m=1FNUD12&c=uyywbncrazkax>

WebMD's *Drinking our Way to Obesity* article [http://www.webmd.com/diet/news/20071210/drinking-our-way-to-obesity?ecd=wnl\\_day\\_121207](http://www.webmd.com/diet/news/20071210/drinking-our-way-to-obesity?ecd=wnl_day_121207)

WebMD's *Cutting Back on Soda* article <http://www.webmd.com/diet/features/how-can-i-stop-drinking-so-much-soda>



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(406) 258-3827 \* [www.co.missoula.mt.us/healthservices/EatSmart](http://www.co.missoula.mt.us/healthservices/EatSmart)