

COCA-COLA SOFT DRINK AKA “COKE”

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“Death in a Jar”
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Dear Subscriber,

Coca-Cola or Coke is a black liquid beverage that we chose to analyze for content. Coke is similar to most of the “soda pop” beverage products and is one of the oldest which is why we chose to analyze it first.

Content: From the label of the Coke bottle – plastic (also available in aluminum can) is the following information (All labels have to list the main ingredients first): Carbonated water, High fructose corn syrup, caramel color, phosphoric acid, natural flavors and caffeine.

- 20 fluid ounces
- Calories = 240
- Sodium = 75mg
- Sugars = 65gms
- Caffeine content = 57mg

Obesity today is the number one preventable cause of death and disease. Children and adults are increasingly coming down with this disease. Sugar consumption is the number one physical cause of obesity. Sugar is a natural substance (that’s good), but in the dosages people consume it today it is toxic to your body. It has been estimated that 50 years ago people consumed an average of 15 pounds of sugar per person per year. Today that number has been calculated to be 175 pounds per person per year. **Sugar** is toxic to the kidneys and pancreas in particular when in higher amounts in the blood.

Diabetes is the disease rapidly increasing in the population, which is an inability to handle sugar metabolism. While all the scientific studies are still ongoing, it is clear that over consumption of sugar is a tremendous offending factor in this disease. Still, despite this number one priority of obesity and sugar consumption, many companies produce and market sugar products enticing people to become more sick. This applies to children and adults where in the “impulse buying” sections of most grocery store check-out lines you will see stacked to the ground for you and your children to impulsively buy this type of sugar product.

High fructose corn syrup is an unnaturally concentrated sugar product made from corn. Many people are expressing concerns about the use of high fructose corn syrup, which is common in innumerable processed foods found in grocery stores. This is understandable given the obesity and diabetes epidemic in the United States. There are also concerns of what other trace chemicals may be found in high fructose corn syrup. Still, the vote is still out on the use of high fructose corn syrup.

Caffeine causes a spike in insulin in the body and is a stimulant. Caffeine is a natural product produced in some plant products. Insulin is a hormonal player in the regulation of sugar metabolism in the body. My main concern with caffeine and sugar is how they both create a “high” in the body’s emotional nature but then that wears off dropping people into a feeling of low energy. Often people get on a roller coaster ride of continually eating sugar and caffeine to be alert. This is addictive on a certain level and leads to disempowering of an individual. Caffeine alone or with sugar lead to energy changes in the body up and down. This makes it difficult to maintain an evenness to one’s moods. Self-discipline, willpower and focusing ability when the caffeine wears off – all are adversely affected.

There are some uses for caffeine in reality such as using them to keep awake in extreme situations. Many people will drink a caffeine product to stay awake while driving at night. I would prefer people pull over and truly rest or sleep but that is not a decision many people will make.

Sodium is a natural mineral required by the body for health but is usually supplied in too high amounts in processed foods. Sodium is the mineral most responsible for high blood pressure.

Aluminum cans are considered by some to be a source of ingesting aluminum into the body, which has been associated with Alzheimer's disease. Plastic bottles also have become a concern for plastic ingestion into the body in the form of **phthalates**. Both chemicals are suspect for causing illness now. There are a vast number of food products now packaged in plastic and aluminum containers so coca-cola is not alone in this area. The original glass bottles are probably the safest container for these types of products if you consume them at all.

Acidity. Coca-Cola is an acid of pH 2.0 to 4.0. All acids are generally considered harder on stomach endothelium leading to ulcers for some people. Coke contains phosphoric acid added for reasons unknown to us at this time. It is generally considered healthier to eat or ingest food on the alkaline side of the acid/alkaline scale of food health.

Coke is a product that contains primarily after water the ingredients: sugar, sodium and caffeine. Why would anyone concerned about health drink it! The pharmacist who originally conceived of the product included cocaine into the drink. If the originating pharmacist was actually trying to formulate an addictive product like tobacco or just trying to devise a commercially successful product is unknown. Today the coca-cola made does not have cocaine in it anymore but still has many of the harmful health effects that concern me.

Coke is a product manufactured by the Coca-Cola Company. The Board of Directors of Coca-cola consists of, as you would expect, many big business, large fortune people. The intermingling of these entities among other big business companies is vast. For example, the Wal-Mart Board of Directors includes a representative from the Coca-Cola Company. The primary owners of Coca-cola are the original family members, SunTrust bank, Warren Buffet and Emory University.

I consider all the soda pop industry manufacturers to be producing detrimental products for the public - due primarily to the sugar and caffeine content. **Close to the addiction potential of cigarettes and tobacco, the combination of sugar and caffeine is nearly as addicting and now the number one destructive product for sale in grocery stores in the United States.**

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To your health!

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The opinion expressed is that of Dr. Mark Laursen, M.D.