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Introduction

This newsletter will be entirely be related to one of my favorite topics. Carbonated beverages are to be avoided after weight loss surgical procedures, specifically after Duodenal switch and Lap Band® or other Adjustable

Gastric banding. There are both anatomical and metabolic reason why we should all, weight loss surgery or not, minimize, if not completely avoid sodas.

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What are Amino Acids, and why we need them?

Amino Acids are the building blocks of the body. Besides building cells and repairing tissue they are involved in our immune system to fight infections. They are also the building blocks of the proteins. When protein is broken down by digestion the result is 22 known amino acids.

As the building blocks of protein, amino acids are vital to our well-being. Next to water, amino acids in the form of proteins make up the greatest portion of our body weight. They comprise tendons, muscles and ligaments; organs and glands; hair and nails; important body fluids, and are necessary part of every cell in your body.

The amino acids are separated into two categories Essential and Non-essential.

Essential amino acids are those that cannot be manufactured by our body, hence, it is essential that you obtain them from your diet. Our body can

manufacture non-essential amino acids, however, it must have the correct combination of essential amino acids and supporting nutrients to optimize healthy protein maintenance, so supplementation may be desirable. 20 amino acids are needed to build the various proteins used in growth, repair and maintenance of body tissue,

Dieters and anyone consuming an inadequate number of calories may not be consuming adequate amounts of amino acids. In these cases, the body will break down the protein in muscle tissue and use those amino acids to meet the needs of more important organs or will simply not build more muscle mass despite increasing exercise.

Unlike carbohydrates and fats the body does not store protein to any significant degree and, it must be consumed on a daily basis.

Diet and regular soft drinks linked to increase in risk factors for heart disease

Drinking more than one soft drink daily — whether it's regular or diet — may be associated with an increase in the risk factors for heart disease, Framingham researchers reported in *Circulation: Journal of the American Heart Association*.

"We were struck by the fact that it didn't matter whether it was a diet or regular soda that participants consumed, the association with increased risk was present," said a senior author of the Framingham Heart Study. "In those who drink one or more soft drinks daily, there was an association of an increased risk of developing the metabolic syndrome."

Metabolic syndrome is a cluster of cardiovascular disease and diabetes risk factors including excess waist circumference, high blood pressure, elevated triglycerides, low levels of high-density lipoprotein (HDL "good" cholesterol) and high fasting glucose levels. The presence of three or more of the factors increases a person's risk of developing diabetes and cardiovascular disease.

Prior studies linked soft drink consumption to multiple risk factors for heart disease.

However, this study showed that association not only included drinking regular calorie-laden soft drinks, but artificially sweetened

diet sodas as well, researchers said.

The Framingham study included nearly 9,000 person observations made in middle-aged men and women over four years at three different times.

In a "snapshot in time" at baseline, the researchers found that individuals consuming one or more soft drinks a day had a 48 percent increased prevalence of the metabolic syndrome compared to those consuming less than one soft drink daily.

In a longitudinal study of participants who were free of metabolic syndrome at baseline (6,039 person observations), consumption of one or more soft drinks a day was associated with a 44 percent higher risk of developing new-onset metabolic syndrome during a follow-up period of four years.

Make no mistake-
It does not matter
if the soda is
regular or diet!



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The researchers also observed that compared to participants who drank less than one soft drink daily, those who drank one or more soft drinks a day had a:

- 31 percent greater risk of developing new-onset obesity (defined as a body mass index [BMI] of 30 kilograms/meter² or more);
- 30 percent increased risk of developing increased waist circumference;
- 25 percent increased risk of developing high blood triglycerides or high fasting blood glucose;
- 32 percent higher risk of having low HDL levels.
- A trend towards an increased risk of developing high blood pressure that was not statistically significant.

Researchers then analyzed a smaller sample of participants on whom data on regular and diet soft drink consumption was available from food frequency questionnaires. Participants who consumed one or more drinks of diet or regular soda per day had a 50 to 60 percent increased risk for developing new-onset metabolic syndrome. It didn't matter whether it was a diet or regular soft drink.

Results also were not driven by the dietary pattern of soft drink users, i.e, by other food items that are typically consumed along with soft drinks," The researchers adjusted the analyses for saturated fat and trans fat intake, dietary fiber consumption, total caloric intake, smoking and physical activity, and still observed a significant association of soft drink consumption and risk of developing the metabolic syndrome and multiple metabolic risk factors."

There are number theories as to what is the cause for this observation. Future studies will be needed to identify the causal relationship between soda consumption and its associated health issues.

For a free brochure about the American Heart Association's diet and nutrition recommendations called "Making Healthy Food and Lifestyle Choices: Our Guide for American Adults," call 1-800-AHA-USA1.

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