KEY FACTS ABOUT OBESITY & SUGAR-SWEETENED BEVERAGES (SSBs)*

- Between 1977 and 2001 Americans' daily calorie consumption increased by 250-300 calories, nearly half of which (43%) came from sugary drinks alone.

- Calories in liquid form do not trigger the same feeling of satiation as those from solid foods. As a result the calories we drink add to those we eat, rather than replace them. Adults who drink one soda or more daily are 27% more likely to be overweight or obese. **For each additional soda a child drinks, his or her risk of obesity goes up 60%.**

- During the 1990s, teens began drinking more sugar-sweetened beverages than milk for the first time; **today, 13% of teen calorie intake comes from soda.**

- In the 1970s, children drank nearly three times more milk than sugar-sweetened beverages. Today, they consume these beverages in equal amounts.

- Young children who drink sugar-sweetened beverages between meals have more than double the risk of being overweight compared to those who don’t, and children who drink sugar-sweetened beverages are more likely to be overweight and obese later in life.

- One study found that **44% of toddlers between 19 and 24 months drink a sugar-sweetened beverage at least daily, as do 70% of 2- to 5-year-olds.**

- Young children who consume a lot of sugar have a poorer overall diet quality because these empty calories replace healthier foods that provide essential nutrients.

- Being obese or overweight is a known risk factor for heart disease, stroke, and some cancers. In 2012, 56% of Howard County adult residents reported being overweight or obese. **One out of every four children in Maryland and one out of every four children in Howard County is obese or overweight.**

- The Institute of Medicine has attributed 20% of the nation's weight problems to **consumption of sugary drinks**, including regular soda, sugar-added juices, flavored waters and teas, sports drinks, and energy drinks. Sugary drinks are now the greatest source of added sugars in the American diet and the number one source of calories in teens' diets.

- **Obese youth are more likely to have risk factors for cardiovascular disease, such as high cholesterol or high blood pressure.** Children who are obese are at greater risk for bone and joint problems, sleep apnea, and social and psychological problems.

The simple step of replacing sugary drinks with better choices can help kids sleep better, be more alert during the day, crave fewer sweet foods, get fewer cavities, and even lose extra weight. Learn more at [HoCoUnsweetened.org](http://HoCoUnsweetened.org).

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*Sources include The Rudd Center for Food Policy and Obesity at Yale University and [www.kickthecan.info](http://www.kickthecan.info).  
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