

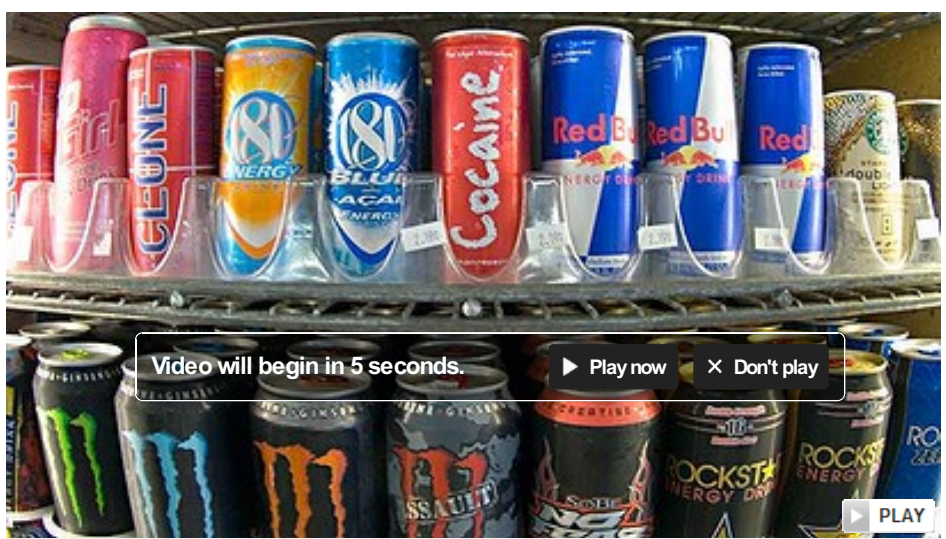
The Sydney Morning Herald National

Caffeine concern over teens and energy drinks

September 5, 2013 Comments 32 Read later

Sarah Whyte
 Consumer affairs reporter, The Sydney Morning Herald
 View more articles from Sarah Whyte
 Follow Sarah on Twitter Email Sarah

Tweet 37 Recommend 39 Share 1 in Share Pin it submit
 Email article Print Reprints & permissions



Concerns over increasing caffeine consumption
 Caffeine is being added to everything from chips to energy drinks which is raising concerns according to dietitian Melanie McGrice.

One in three teenagers may be consuming the equivalent of 10 instant coffees a day in energy drinks that can cause insomnia, anxiety and heart problems, a leading sleep expert says.

A survey of 110 patients conducted by Chris Seaton, a paediatric sleep specialist from the Westmead Children's Hospital, found 35 per cent of teenagers consume at least two energy drinks a day.

A daily dose of caffeine should not exceed 200 to 300 milligrams, yet a 500 millilitre serving of Mother, Monster or Red Bull contains 160 milligrams of caffeine, and some teens drink three a day. "They are getting into it before school," Dr Seaton said. Health professionals are calling for tighter regulations on the availability of energy drinks which, with sales of \$593 million a year, make up the fastest growing beverage sector.

"Teenagers are limited in getting alcohol and

Advertisement


Related Coverage


Concerns over increasing caffeine consumption  01:41

National News Video [More video](#)


Fire destroys boat on the Yarra
 Dramatic scenes on the Yarra River early Tuesday as a boat is engulfed in flames beside Flinders Street Station.


 PLAY
 Tunnel delivered Liberal votes Premier claims

 PLAY
 How will micro-parties affect the Senate?

 PLAY
 Rudd needs to leave Parliament'


Featured advertisers

 **Adventure Holidays**
 Cycle Myanmar with Ben Groundwater

 **The Vine Music, News & Reviews**
 Get the latest here

Family Health Insurance

Brand	Premium	Cashback
frank	\$187.07	\$269.35
AHM	\$286.40	\$343.68

Powered by  [Get 3 Personalised Quotes Now](#)

Teenagers are limited in getting alcohol and tobacco, but there is no limitation on energy drinks. It's a real free-for-all," Dr Seaton said. "Caffeine in high doses is a toxic substance and there has been a couple of reported teenage deaths related to an overdose."

The high sugar content in energy drinks is just as concerning, says Jane Martin, who leads the Obesity Policy Coalition. One 500-millilitre Red Bull contains the equivalent of 13 teaspoons of sugar.

The health concerns follows a discussion paper presented to the federal government that showed energy drink consumption in Australia and New Zealand has more than quadrupled from 34.5 million litres in 2001 to 155.6 million litres in 2010.

The dangers of excessive caffeine is a "forgotten thing", Dr Seaton said.

An Australian study released last year also found a sharp rise in the number of people who reported heart problems, tremors and chest pains after drinking the beverages, particularly teenagers.

Close to 300 calls were made to NSW's poisons centre regarding adverse reactions to energy drinks between January 2004 and the end of 2010, with more than a third of people attending hospital, the report said.

But the peak body for non-alcoholic beverages, the Australian Beverage Council, argued energy drinks were one of the "most regulated" in the world, including health warning labels.

"The industry acknowledges energy drinks are a topical issue, but when viewed in the context of the total diet they represent a very small part - unlike other products like coffee," chief executive Geoff Parker said.

Correction: The original version of this story said one 250-millilitre Red Bull contains the equivalent of 13 teaspoons of sugar. It should have referred to one 500-millilitre Red Bull.

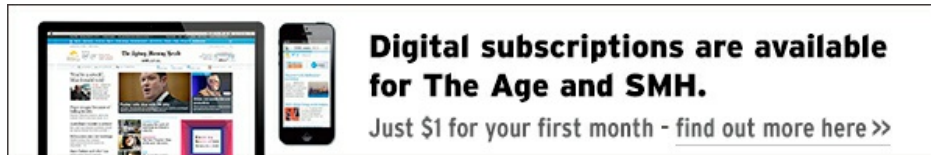


Illustration: Cathy Wilcox.

Most commented

Articles	Blogs
1. Murdoch hits out at public servants	336
2. Apathy about indigenous arts is 'cultural apartheid'	92
3. How Abbott's booby upset Facebook	49
4. Heavy drinkers upping their intake even more	45
5. Caffeine concern over teens and energy drinks	32
6. 'Curious' Senate results could see review	32
7. Advice for public servants facing the post-election chop	26
8. Pom not an automatic sacking offence: tribunal	23
9. Nokia sells to Microsoft, closing chapter in Finland's source of national pride	21
10. Is the app store gold rush over?	19

Advertisement



Ads by Google

[1 Tip To Lose Belly Fat](#) [MiracleGarciniaCambogia.com](#)

Cut pounds of stomach fat every week by using this 1 weird old tip.

[2013 Best Skin Tighteners](#) [www.SkinCareSearch.com/FaceLifting](#)

An Unbiased Review List of The Top Performing Skin Tighteners In 2013

[Diabetes Treatment](#) [TopHealthResources.com](#)

Top 5 treatments for diabetes! Find the treatment for you here

Current jobs **MY CAREER**

Business Analyst | Bri...
\$100,000 - \$120,000+
 Brisbane CBD, QLD...
 Adecco Services
[View Job](#)

Business Services Seni...
\$70,000 - \$75,000+
 Brisbane CBD, QLD...
 Adecco Services
[View Job](#)

Financial Analyst | In...
\$100,000 - \$110,000+
 Brisbane CBD, QLD...
 Adecco Services
[View Job](#)

Learn More [Earn More.](#)

➔ [Master of Social Work](#) ➔ [Graduate Certificate in Project Management](#)

Recommended



FROM THE