

# Energy Drinks Stripping Your Teeth of Strength

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New generation sports drinks can boost your energy, but they may also be zapping your teeth in way that's not so healthy. You may remember our experiments last year on colas; wait until you see the latest experiments on energy drinks.

Energy drinks are designed to boost your stamina, supposedly when you need it. But younger people now have embraced the drinks, consuming them like recreational beverages.



With caffeine and sugar and stuff to make them fizz a lot, the new generation energy drinks are highly acidic. How much so?

Day One: We begin the experiment with healthy adult teeth donated to us by the University of Utah dental clinic. We place the teeth in a container, which will become our test tube. Each day for the next 17 days, we' refreshed the container with an energy drink.

Dr. Craig Olson, who heads up the University of Utah's Dental Residency Program, oversaw our experiment. At the end of the 17 days we took our test tube to his clinic for the final test. Had the energy drinks damaged the enamel, one of the hardest surfaces in Nature. And if so, how much?

Craig Olson: "On a normal tooth, this knife would just be slipping across it, it would be sliding. And with this stuff, I'm scraping off enamel. I'm probably scraping off half the total thickness of the enamel on the tooth."



Half the total thickness of the enamel, in this case peeling off in chunks. Craig Olson: "This is way more dramatic than the Coke."

More damaging than cola drinks, which in our first experiment last year were at the top of the list. But up against energy drinks, the colas, which dissolved less than five millimeters of enamel, pale in comparison.



In fact, in a duplicate experiment at the University of Maryland, Coca Cola is almost at the bottom of the list, just above black tea. But at the top is KMX energy drink, which destroyed a whopping 30 milligrams of enamel. Next, follows Snapple Classic Lemonade, Red Bull, Lemon-lime Gatorade, Powerade.



Approaching the halfway point, one version of Nantucket Nectars, Propel natural lemon fitness water, Fanta Orange, then Nestea lemon sweetened tea, Arizona Iced tea, and, as we said, Coke and Black tea at the bottom.

For the high acidic products, Dr. Olson says a lot depends on how we drink.

Graige Olson: "Don't sip it all day long. You know, if you're going to drink it, drink it. If you want to make your dentist rich and famous, drink it slowly."

Dr. Olson's advice, use a straw and swallow, don't bathe the mouth in the drink.

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