ABA Answers 5 Questions About Diet Beverages

WASHINGTON (PRNewswire-USNewswire) —The following is being released by the American Beverage Association:

WEIGHT
Q: I've heard that low- and no-calorie beverages might cause weight gain. Is that true?
A: There is no evidence to suggest eating or drinking products with low-calorie sweeteners affects body weight.[1] In fact, drinking low- and no-calorie beverages may help overweight and obese individuals shed a few pounds, since they can help reduce calories.[2] Among those who have achieved significant weight loss, drinking low- and no-calorie beverages is one of the habits that help them keep weight off.[3]

SAFETY
Q: There's information online suggesting diet beverages might cause health problems. Are low- and no-calorie beverages safe?
A: Hundreds of studies have shown the safety of low- and no-calorie sweeteners used in beverages – as well as many foods – in the United States and worldwide.[4] The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA)[5] and the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA)[6] are just two of the many government agencies that have examined and approved low- and no-calorie sweeteners for use in more than 100 countries. Even the Expert Committee on Food Additives, which is a joint group of scientific experts overseen by the World Health Organization's and the United Nations' (UN) Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), give low-calorie sweeteners their blessing.[7]

APPETITE
Q: I have an insatiable sweet tooth. Does drinking low- and no-calorie beverages cause sweet cravings?
A: Scientific research shows that sugar substitutes do not cause sweet cravings, nor do they promote hunger.[8,9,10] In the recent Choose Healthy Options Consciously Everyday study, researchers compared low- and no-calorie beverages with water and found that neither caused food cravings.[11] A scientific review of youth populations also showed no evidence that low- and no-calorie sweeteners prompt snacking or overeating at meals.[12] So, the claims that low-calorie sweeteners fuel a sweet tooth are unfounded and not supported by scientific evidence.

MINDFUL EATING
Q: Do low- and no-calorie sweeteners curb appetite?
A: Low- and no-calorie sweeteners don't suppress appetite, but they help make low-calorie foods and beverages tastier, which makes it easier to follow a lower-calorie regimen. The federal government's National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey found that those who eat a balanced diet are also likely to drink low and no-calorie beverages.[13] Results from the government's Continuing Survey

of Food Intakes by Individuals and the Diet Health and Knowledge Survey reveal that people who consume low-calorie, sugar-free foods and beverages are more aware of what they eat, eat a more balanced diet and consume fewer daily calories.[14]

HEART DISEASE

Q: Are diet sodas linked with heart disease?

A: In the Coronary Artery Risk Development in Young Adults Study, designed to evaluate diet beverages and heart disease risk over 20 years, researchers classified diet as either "prudent" (packed with fruits, vegetables, whole grains and fish), or "western" (filled with junk food, fried foods and meat). The study found that diet soda drinkers who followed "prudent" diets were much less likely to develop risk factors for heart disease and type 2 diabetes than diet soda drinkers who ate a "western" diet.[15]

Bottom line: Low- and no-calorie beverages can be an effective tool as part of an overall weight management plan.

Find more facts about diet beverages at www.letsclearitup.org *[1]*

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[1] http://www.letsclearitup.org/