

Sports drink vs water

Written by Administrator
Thursday, 24 July 2014 15:29 -

DANGEROUS DISEASES OF SPORT DRINKS

GIVE YOUR CHILDREN WATER AND FRUIT – NOT POISONOUS SOFT DRINKS

Sports drink vs water: The choice is clear

If children require water and a few minerals after a game, why not give them a bottle of water and a piece of fruit? Asks Casey Seidenberg

LIKE many little athletes, my boys enjoy Gatorade, Powerade and all of those other brightly coloured sports drinks. I don't.

I have seen the advertisements, so I gather that these drinks are designed to replenish electrolytes lost through sweat and that celebrity athletes drink them. Yet what child actually needs 34 grams of sugar and a dose of chemical food dye in order to replenish after a one-hour sports game?

Yes, these kids are playing hard and sweating, thus they need to reload, but what they need immediately after a game is water. Could they use some electrolytes with their water? Of course. What exactly are electrolytes? In layman's terms, they are minerals such as potassium, calcium and sodium that help water flow into cells.

If children require water and a few minerals after a game, why not give them a bottle of water and a piece of fruit?

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A 591ml bottle of Powerade has 75mg of potassium, while a small tangerine has 131mg and a banana has 422mg. A banana also has vitamins B and C, 16 percent of the daily requirement of manganese, which is great for bones, and 8 percent of magnesium, which prevents cramping.

There is even a gram or two of protein in a banana. A tangerine has calcium, magnesium, vitamin C and folate.

Besides the small amount of potassium, what else does the sports drink offer?

Thirty-four grams of sugar. If a child with an empty stomach is given 34 grams of processed sugar, the sugar will flow into the bloodstream quickly. A banana and a clementine both have fibre, which slows any natural sugars from entering the bloodstream. There is no fibre in the average sports drink.

This rush of glucose will raise a child's insulin levels, and this elevated insulin triggers his body to store fat and to hold on to existing fat.

When the sugars hit the liver, they can be deposited there. So even when a kid isn't "fat" on the outside, there is unnecessary fat storage happening on the inside, which, with confused insulin responses, predisposes a child to all kinds of disease.

Obviously one sports drink isn't going to doom a child for ever. But setting the expectation that a child athlete "needs" a sports drink to replenish after a game or practice creates a long-term habit that can become dangerous when you think ahead to the practices and games he is going to play throughout his school years.

Remember that these drinks were originally designed for performance athletes, not growing children.

When I see celebrity athletes endorsing the drinks, I often wonder whether they could just

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endorse water. A mom can dream. – The Washington Post

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