

# The Facts

## About Energy Drinks



Refreshments Canada and its members are proud to provide Canadians with a wide variety of beverages including soft drinks, sports drinks, juices, bottled waters and several varieties of energy drinks. Energy drinks are a fairly new and unique product offering in Canada and it is important that they are used as directed.

Contact us at:  
[www.refreshments.ca](http://www.refreshments.ca)

### What Energy Drinks are:

Energy drinks are typically meant to supply mental and physical stimulation restoring alertness and wakefulness when fatigued or drowsy. By volume, most mainstream energy drinks have less caffeine than coffee and may include other approved ingredients (eg. minerals, vitamins guarana, ginseng, taurine) to provide stimulation.

### Where Energy Drinks are Sold:

Energy drinks are currently sold in every major regulatory jurisdiction and in more than 150 countries around the world.

### The Safety of Energy Drinks:

Health authorities and scientific expert panels in these various jurisdictions around the world have assessed energy drinks and their ingredients and have concluded that energy drinks are beverages that can be safely consumed.

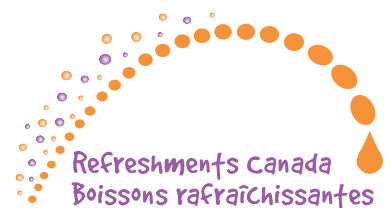
### Assessing and Licensing of Energy Drinks in Canada:

In Canada energy drinks are assessed and licensed under Health Canada's Natural Health Products Regulation and classified as Natural Health Products (NHPs). Energy drinks are formulated, labelled and marketed to meet the requirements of the Regulation and Health Canada's *Consumer Advertising Guidelines for Marketed Health Products (for Nonprescription Drugs including Natural Health Products)*.

### Recommended use of Energy Drinks:

As a product category energy drinks are recommended for adults and are **not recommended for children, pregnant or breastfeeding women, and people who are sensitive to caffeine.**

As with all Natural Health Products it is important to read the label and use as directed. Energy drink labels in Canada contain information on recommended use, recommended dosage, intended population, any cautions and lists of medicinal and non-medicinal ingredients.





# Energy Drink Frequently Asked Questions:

## How much caffeine is in an energy drink?

Mainstream energy drinks (i.e. those products that represent the vast majority of sales in the energy drinks category in Canada) generally contain between 70 mg and 160 mg of caffeine per container (depending on the size of the container).

To put that into context a typical 237 ml (8 oz) cup of filter-drip coffee has 179 mg of caffeine, a typical cola-type beverage has approximately 40 mg of caffeine in a 355ml can and a large 'iced cappuccino' (532ml) produced by a leading national chain has 150 mg of caffeine.

Even when consuming the maximum recommended daily dose for most mainstream energy drinks, caffeine intake would be comparable to two cups of coffee.

## Should energy drinks be mixed with alcohol?

Energy drinks are non-alcoholic beverages and are not recommended to be mixed with alcohol. For most of our members' energy drinks, this is already clearly stated on the label; for a few product lines, our members are in the final process of converting their labels to include this declaration. Refreshments Canada and its members do not promote mixing energy drinks with alcohol of any kind.

## Why should I read the label?

Energy drink product labels contain important recommendations from the manufacturer as to who should (and who should not) consume the product. It also provides information on intended use, appropriate daily consumption amounts and ingredients.

## Are energy drinks and sports drinks the same thing?

No, energy drinks should not be confused with sports drinks. Sports drinks are beverages that are specifically formulated to re-hydrate the body and usually provide carbohydrate energy needed for physical activity. These sports drinks also replenish electrolytes which maintain salt and potassium balances in the body. Energy drinks, on the other hand, are typically meant to supply mental and physical stimulation, restoring alertness and wakefulness when fatigued or drowsy.

## Where can I get more information?

Health Canada maintains a variety of fact sheets for consumers on energy drinks, caffeine and other important health related information. This can be accessed from: [www.hc-sc.gc.ca](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca).

### Energy Drink Fact Sheet:

<http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hl-vs/iyh-vsv/prod/energy-energie-eng.php>

### Caffeine Fact Sheet:

<http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hl-vs/iyh-vsv/food-aliment/caffeine-eng.php>

## How many energy drinks can I consume in a day?

It is very important to read the product label to understand the recommended daily dosage. Generally for mainstream energy drinks, the maximum recommended dosage is one to two cans a day. In addition, consumers should be aware of other caffeine sources and adjust their intake accordingly.

## Who should (and should not) drink energy drinks?

Energy drinks are formulated and recommended for adults. Energy drinks are not recommended for children, pregnant or breastfeeding women, and people who are sensitive to caffeine.

## What are Natural Health Products?

Under the Natural Health Products Regulations, which came into effect on January 1, 2004, natural health products (NHPs) are intended for a therapeutic purpose (e.g. treat or prevent a disease, restore or modify organic functions, etc) and include:

- Vitamins and minerals
- Homeopathic medicines
- Traditional medicines such as traditional Chinese medicines
- Herbal remedies
- Probiotics
- Other products like amino acids and essential fatty acids

NHPs must be safe for consideration as over-the-counter products and not require a prescription to be sold.

