



# CONGENITAL HEART DISEASE ENERGY DRINKS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE



## Energy and caffeinated drinks

Energy drinks contain a range of ingredients including caffeine and other substances such as guarana extract, taurine and ginseng. Caffeine is a stimulant that increases activity in the brain and central nervous system. The short-term effects of caffeine on your body include increased breathing and heart rate, as well as increased mental alertness and physical energy.

With larger or more frequent amounts of energy drinks there are further effects such as:

- Rise in body temperature
- Frequent urination
- Dehydration
- Dizziness and headaches
- Rapid or abnormal heartbeat (palpitations)
- Anxiety and irritability
- Sleeplessness

The effects of these drinks can occur in anyone; in fact, there has been a rise in the numbers of people experiencing adverse effects, noted in studies in Australia and the US.



## What's the risk to me?

Take time to talk with your medical team about these drinks and the risks they pose for you. This will help you decide if the drinks are the right choice for you. Some people who are prone to abnormal heart rhythm problems or have complex congenital heart disease may be safest avoiding energy drinks entirely.

## Further information and useful links:

- Energy drinks, health risks and toxicity: [mja.com.au/journal/2012/196/1/energy-drinks-health-risks-andtoxicity](http://mja.com.au/journal/2012/196/1/energy-drinks-health-risks-andtoxicity)
- Energy drinks: a trigger for heart attacks and stroke? [theconversation.com/energy-drinks-a-trigger-forheart-attacks-and-stroke-7036](http://theconversation.com/energy-drinks-a-trigger-forheart-attacks-and-stroke-7036)

## Where can I go for further help?

People with congenital heart disease face unique challenges, treatment and often repeated surgeries for their entire lives, and support is critical at every stage of the journey – from when congenital heart disease is diagnosed through childhood, the teenage years and into adulthood.

HeartKids is the only national charity dedicated to supporting Australians of all ages impacted by congenital heart disease, the leading cause of infant death in Australia and a complex chronic disease requiring lifelong treatment.

For over forty years, HeartKids has provided timely support to infants, young people and adults living with congenital heart disease all across Australia. We also fund life-saving research, provide reliable and evidence-based information and advocate for the needs of impacted families.

Our support is a commitment for life.



Medtronic Australasia has supported the development of this factsheet for educational purposes, with no influence on the clinical content.

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People should ask their doctor any questions about diagnosis and treatment.  
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