



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

**News Release**

**NEIL ABERCROMBIE**  
GOVERNOR

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**NEW STUDY LINKS SUGAR-SWEETENED DRINKS TO  
INCREASED RISK OF HEART DISEASE IN MEN**

HONOLULU – The Hawai'i State Department of Health (DOH) and the Hawai'i Chapter of the American Heart Association today announced research showed men who drank a 12-ounce sugar-sweetened beverage a day had a 20 percent higher risk of heart disease compared to men who didn't drink any sugar-sweetened drinks. The study was published today in the American Heart Association journal *Circulation*.

"The study supports this administration's work to educate the public in making healthier choices, including drinking less sugar," said Health Director Loretta Fuddy. "We stand with the American Heart Association today in the fight to reduce cardiovascular disease in Hawai'i by arming the public with the newest and best information to make healthier choices and help reduce chronic disease and prevent obesity."

The American Heart Association supports policy efforts that reduce coronary heart disease and its risk factors like obesity. Dr. Corilee Watters, advocate and spokesperson for the American Heart Association, states that "public health approaches that include policy changes and pricing changes have demonstrated impact in consumer behaviors. We need to create healthy environments where the healthiest choice is the easy choice in terms of price and availability. Sugar-sweetened beverages are the largest single source of sugar in our diets, and provide no nutritional benefits."

(more)

“This study adds to the body of knowledge on the negative health effects related to excess sugar consumption in the American diet. Reducing consumption of sugar and sugar-sweetened beverages is an important goal in preserving the health of Americans,” said Dr. Jay Maddock, Director of the University of Hawai‘i’s Office of Public Health Studies.

Cardiovascular disease (CVD) is the leading cause of death in Hawai‘i. In 2009, more than 2,900 deaths or 32 percent of all deaths in the state were due to CVD. Of these deaths, 73 percent were due to heart disease and 21 percent were due to stroke. CVD is also a major source of hospitalization, accounting for 18,372 discharges in 2010. Risk factors for heart disease include obesity, smoking, physical inactivity, diabetes and poor diet.

The study followed 42,883 men over 20 years. Participants were primarily Caucasian men 40-75 years old, and all were employed in a health-related profession. Researchers found that the increase in risk of heart disease persisted even after controlling for other risk factors, including smoking, physical inactivity, alcohol use and family history of heart disease. Less frequent consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages — twice weekly and twice monthly — didn’t increase risk. Further details about the study and additional resources are available at: [http://newsroom.heart.org/pr/aha/\\_prv-sugar-sweetened-drinks-linked-230144.aspx](http://newsroom.heart.org/pr/aha/_prv-sugar-sweetened-drinks-linked-230144.aspx)

The American Heart Association and DOH recommend no more than half of discretionary calories come from added sugars. For most American men, that’s no more than 150 calories per day and 100 for most American women. Discretionary calories are those left in your “energy allowance” after consuming the recommended types and amounts of foods to meet all daily nutrient requirements.

The DOH launched its “Take the LEAP” campaign in 2010 to educate Hawai‘i residents through television and radio ads about the risks associated with obesity and over consumption of sugar-sweetened drinks. The DOH will continue its public education efforts to urge people to make healthier choices and advocate for policy and infrastructure changes that support healthy lifestyles and reduce healthcare costs.

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