Press Release

Energy drinks do more harm than good to the body

_The caffeine and other ingredients in these drinks can lead to various health issues in the long term_

**New Delhi, 16 November 2017:** Consumption of energy drinks can cause serious health risks including risk-seeking behavior, mental health problems, increased blood pressure, obesity, and kidney damage, warns a recent study. Another worrying phenomenon is that of mixing energy drinks with alcohol. The ingredients in most energy drinks include water, sugar, caffeine, certain vitamins, minerals and non-nutritive stimulants such as guarana, taurine, and ginseng.

Certain energy drinks have about 100mg caffeine per fluid ounce which is eight times more than regular coffee, which has 12mg per fluid ounce of caffeine. While the daily recommended caffeine intake for adults is 400mg, there is not enough research on the tolerable levels for children and adolescents. All the above-mentioned health risks are due to the high sugar and caffeine levels in these energy drinks.

Speaking about this, **Padma Shri Awardee Dr K K Aggarwal, National President Indian Medical Association (IMA) and President Heart Care Foundation of India (HCFI) and Dr RN Tandon – Honorary Secretary General IMA in a joint statement**, said, “Energy drinks can cause more harm than good. The large amounts of caffeine in them can lead to serious heart rhythm, blood flow, and blood pressure problems in the young and old alike. Taurine, one of the ingredients in these drinks, is a caffeine adjuvant, meaning that it aids the effects of caffeine. Apart from this, those who mix energy drinks with alcohol end up consuming more alcohol than if they were drinking alcohol alone. Energy drinks are thought to mask the signs of alcohol inebriation, thus making a person consume more and increasing the likelihood of dehydration and alcohol poisoning.”

Energy drinks can be potentially dangerous for certain groups including those under 18 years of age, pregnant women, those with caffeine sensitivity, and people on certain medications such as Adderall, which is prescribed for ADHD.

Adding further, **Dr Aggarwal**, said, “It is also often seen that energy drinks are marketed and sold in stores under the same category as sports drinks. However, as per studies, they do not help in enhancing or promoting athletic ability in any way. It is important to remember that our body can obtain energy from other sources as well and that we do not need to depend on these energy
drinks or caffeine for the same. Understanding this can help avert many complications in the longer term.”

Here are few food items that can help you keep alert and energized through the day, albeit naturally.

- **Green tea** It contains vitamins A, B, C and E, and improves circulation and metabolism. It also contains L-theanine which is an antioxidant found only in tea.

- **Wheatgrass** It is rich in vitamins A, C, E, beta-carotene, amino acids, and calcium. The B vitamins, especially B12, iron and magnesium in wheatgrass do wonders in increasing energy levels.

- **Banana** They can help in fighting fatigue due to the electrolytes present in them including potassium, magnesium, sodium, calcium, and phosphorus.

- **Water** A person experiences decrease in energy levels when the water content in their body goes down. Make sure to consume enough water to fight away fatigue.

- **Nuts** These are rich in protein, which stabilizes blood sugar levels. Nuts like walnuts and almonds are high in magnesium and omega-3 fatty acids, which help in boosting energy levels.

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**About IMA**: Indian Medical Association is the only representative, national voluntary organization of Doctors of Modern Scientific System of Medicine, which looks after the interest of doctors as well as the well being of the community at large. It has its Headquarter in Delhi and State / Terr. Branches in 30 States and Union Territories. It has over 2, 60,000 doctors as its members through more than 1765 active local branches spread across the country.

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