

ENERGY DRINKS - PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS OF PRODUCT LABEL INFORMATION

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Abstract

Background.

Energy drink consumption is currently an emerging and a diverse phenomenon globally. The youth (*in South Africa*) becomes an attractive consumer base for such 'energy' products, due to various social-cultural and lifestyle shifts. For the non-affluent youth consumer, who may not be able to afford nutritional supplement products, may resort to energy drinks, to redirect their ideas of a good body-image. In contrast the affluent youth consumer may compliment their nutritional supplement regime, with energy drinks. The information or sources for these products may not necessarily be accurate, due to the general non-regulation of the industry. It therefore is important to have specific knowledge and understanding of information as stated on the product labels and/or gathered for energy drinks, that will contribute to ensure informed choice for the consumer.

Aim.

To analyze the labeling information on commercially available Energy Drink products in South African.

Methodology.

Energy drink products that were available were purchased at various retailers and shops in major centers', in South Africa. Labeling information as stated on the products was analyzed according to specific predetermined categories.

Results.

Forty-three percent (43%) of Energy Drinks products analyzed was locally produced, and fifty-seven percent (57%) imported. The label information categories were; pseudo- scientific and pledge (29%), warnings (27%), claims (13%), general information and pseudo-claims (13%), consumer and public relations (10%), disclaimers (6%), quality assurance (2%)

Conclusion.

Sport, recreation and social consumers of Energy Drinks need to be alerted to the extent of label information content, specifically related to product consumption content, which may adversely impact their health and well-being.