

Beverage Industry Critiques Study Tying Diet Soda Consumption to Stroke and Dementia

Article By:

Food and Drug Law at Keller and Heckman

- As our readership is well aware, low-calorie sweeteners have been extensively reviewed by government safety authorities around the world, including the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), and proven to be safe for consumption. Over the years, artificially sweetened drinks, like diet sodas, have come under scrutiny in studies attempting to associate the consumption of such drinks with negative health outcomes. Importantly, no studies have shown an actual cause-and-effect relationship between consumption of artificially-sweetened drinks and increased risk for a negative health outcome.
- Yesterday, a new study published in the American Heart Association's journal *Stroke* reported that artificially sweetened drinks, such as diet sodas, were tied to a higher risk of stroke and dementia. The study sheds light only on an association and *not* an actual cause-and-effect relationship between consuming artificially sweetened drinks and an increased risk for stroke and dementia. The study has been covered widely in the press. The American Beverage Association (ABA) immediately pushed back, highlighting the fact that the authors of the study "acknowledge that their conclusions do not – and cannot – prove cause and effect." ABA further notes that, "According to the National Institutes of Health (NIH), many risk factors can increase an individual's likelihood of developing stroke and dementia including age, hypertension, diabetes and genetics. NIH does not mention zero calorie sweeteners as a risk factor."
- Given the substantial scientific literature favoring the safety of low-calorie sweeteners, this latest study – which does not prove cause and effect – will have little impact on the ongoing discourse concerning the safety of low-calorie sweeteners and, in particular, diet sodas, in the long term.

Source URL: <https://natlawreview.com/article/beverage-industry-critiques-study-tying-diet-soda-consumption-to-stroke-and-dementia>