

# Coca Cola Faces Lawsuit Over Vitaminwater

Coca Cola's Vitaminwater product has the same amount of sugar as regular soda. So now they face a lawsuit for misleading the public.

A class-action suit contends that Coca-Cola is illegally marketing its "Vitaminwater" line as a healthy product. The Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI) is one party to the suit, which cites California consumer-protection laws. According to the suit, "Vitaminwater is not a healthy beverage. Rather it is sugar water -- just like soft drinks -- with a few added vitamins."

The suit cites the labeling of Vitaminwater with flavors such as "defense," "rescue," "energy" and "multi-v" as proof of its health claims. The suit asks that California consumers of Vitaminwater be awarded actual and punitive damages. Comment from Health Expert Dr. Mercola

With a name like "Vitaminwater," there's no doubt Glaceau, the maker of Vitaminwater, is trying to pass this brightly colored sugary beverage line off as healthy. It's their attempt to cash in on a growing trend among Americans and others around the world to seek out health-supporting drinks instead of soda -- and it's working.

Coca-Cola is not stupid and after significant due diligence they bought Glaceau in 2007 for \$4.1 billion. Since then, Information Resource Inc. reported that the brand increased sales by over 19 percent in 2008. There is no doubt in my mind that people are willing to buy these pricey drinks because of the illusion that they will promote their health.

The varieties include such catchy names as "defense," "rescue," "energy" and "endurance," and the maker claims the drinks can reduce your risk of chronic disease and eye disease, promote healthy joints and support immune function.

### What's Really Lurking in a Bottle of Vitaminwater?

The average person picking up a bottle of Vitaminwater would easily think this is simply flavored water with added vitamins and minerals, which sounds like a good thing, right?

Well, in reality a bottle of Vitaminwater contains 33 grams of sugar, including crystalline fructose.

So the average consumer will believe they are doing themselves and their family a huge favor by choosing Vitaminwater over soda when the reality is that there is not much difference -- Vitaminwater has over SIX TEASPOONS of sugar in it.

What is crystalline fructose? According to The Sugar Association, "Crystalline fructose is produced by allowing the fructose to crystallize from a fructose-enriched corn syrup."

While many people mistakenly believe that fructose is an acceptable form of sweetener, it is far from healthy. Refined man-made fructose metabolizes to triglycerides and adipose tissue, not blood glucose. The downside of this is that fructose does not stimulate your insulin secretion, nor enhance leptin production. (Leptin is a hormone involved in appetite regulation.)

Because insulin and leptin act as key signals in regulating how much food you eat, as well as your body weight, this suggests that dietary fructose may contribute to increased food intake and weight gain.

Additionally, fructose is also known to significantly raise your triglycerides, which puts you at an increased risk of heart disease.

So in no way, shape or form is Vitaminwater something I'd consider healthy. CSPI, who filed the suit against Coca-Cola, was right on when they said: "According to CSPI nutritionists, the 33 grams of sugar in each bottle of Vitaminwater do more to promote obesity, diabetes and other health problems than the vitamins in the drinks do to perform the advertised benefits listed on the bottles."

CSPI litigation director Steve Gardner went on to say: "Coke fears, probably correctly, that they'll sell less soda as Americans become increasingly concerned with obesity, diabetes, and other conditions linked to diets too high in sugar. VitaminWater is Coke's attempt to dress up soda in a physician's white coat. Underneath, it's still sugar water, albeit sugar water that costs about ten bucks a gallon."

If you think Vitaminwater is a stretch, Coca-Cola even came out with a Diet Coke Plus, which contains vitamins as well, and was being marketed as a health food until the FDA stepped in late last year.

If you gain nothing else from this article, let it serve as a reminder as to the importance of reading labels. As the saying goes, you can't judge a book by its cover &hellip; and you can't judge a food product by its cover either. If

you are opting to buy any processed food, make sure to flip it over and read the ingredients for yourself, regardless of how healthy it appears to be.

The simple fact remains that drinking any flavored, sweetened beverage is not going to push your health in a positive direction, whether or not it is sprinkled with a few added vitamins. A better choice is to drink pure water, and get your vitamins the way they were designed to be obtained.

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