



## Why You Might Want to Cut Back on Seltzer

*Many of us drink unsweetened seltzer like it's water, but that might be a mistake.*



It's been years since **flavored seltzer burst onto the hydration scene**, and now it's easier than ever to find the stuff in pretty much any flavor you can dream of. And, for most of us, it's easier to drink enough water every day when said water is bubbly and tastes like **cherry blossom**, or **limoncello**, or **watermelon**.

But despite the fact that flavored seltzer has no calories, sugar or artificial sweeteners, experts say that it's not an exact substitute for regular old water. We're not trying to sound any mega alarm bells — go ahead and keep sipping that can of **pamplemousse** without guilt! But if you see seltzer as an all-the-time replacement for water, it's probably time to rethink how you drink it. Here's what experts have to say about how flavored seltzer affects your body.

## Does Seltzer Damage Your Teeth?

Although seltzer doesn't contain any sugar — the main villain when it comes to teeth — some dentists believe that it might be worth limiting your consumption.

Again, because seltzer is carbonated with carbon dioxide, it's slightly more acidic than regular water. Pure water is neutral with a pH of 7, **mineral water lands somewhere between a 5 and a 6, unflavored sparkling water like San Pellegrino and Perrier are around 5.25, and flavored seltzers like Bubly and LaCroix are generally between 3.8 and 4.8, depending on the flavor.** That means that seltzer is far less acidic than most other beverages — **coke has a pH of 2.6-2.7, Sprite is about 3.3 and orange juice is about 3.5.**

"Generally speaking, carbonation alone does not appear to damage the teeth, it's the added ingredients that can contribute to the demineralization of teeth," says **Dr. Alex Rubinov, DDS**, a cosmetic dentist based in New York City. Flavored seltzer sometimes contains added ingredients that are acidic, which means they're more likely to cause tooth erosion than unflavored seltzers or plain water. But Rubinov says that it's fine to drink them in moderation: "My rule of thumb would be one can a day with meals, and try to wash everything down with regular flat water at the end of the meal." And if you're drinking seltzer outside of meals, he still recommends rinsing your mouth with plain water afterwards, which can wash away any remaining acid.

## Is It Possible to Drink Too Much Seltzer?

The fact of the matter is that chugging seltzer water won't have a huge negative impact on your overall health. Doctors aren't concerned about the slight acidity of seltzer water impacting your organs, and unless you're urinating constantly or noticing symptoms of overhydration, they say there's no need to cut back.

But when it comes to dental health, seltzer's slight acidity can add up over time. Rubinov recommends sticking to no more than one can of seltzer per day, and drinking it alongside a meal and some regular water to keep the acid from sticking to your teeth. But if you have good dental hygiene overall — regular brushing and flossing, and professional cleanings as recommended by your dentist — an extra can here or there probably won't hurt.