

## LIFETIME FAMILY WELLNESS

## Diet Soda Poses Same Risk of Heart Problems as Non-diet

A new study published in the July 23, 2007 journal "Circulation" and reported on the WebMD website the next day suggested that drinking diet soda does not decrease the risk of heart attack compared to drinking regular sugared soda.

The study comes from a large, multi-generational heart study that followed residents of Framingham, Mass., a town about 25 miles west of Boston. In this study researchers observed approximately 6,000 middle-aged men and women to see the effect drinking diet soda would have on heart health.

Researchers found the results were surprising. Study senior author, Dr. Vasan Ramachandran of the Boston University School of Medicine commented, "It's intriguing and it begs an explanation by people who are qualified to do studies to understand this better."

Barry Popkin, of the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill voiced his concern about the study by saying, "There's too much contradictory evidence that shows that diet beverages are healthier for you in terms of losing weight that I would not put any credence to the result on the diet (drinks)."

The study did show that those who drank soda, whether diet or not, were subject to an increase in "metabolic syndrome", a cluster of symptoms that increase the risk for heart disease and a host of other heart issues.

The American Heart Association issued a statement in response to the study, "Diet soda can be a good option to replace caloric beverages that do not contain important vitamins and minerals."

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