

Consumers respond to lower calorie beverage options

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At Experimental Biology 2009, Dr. Maureen Storey, senior vice president of science policy for the American Beverage Association, today briefed colleagues on her new analysis indicating that consumers of all ages are drinking more lower-calorie beverages than they did several years ago. The data are from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES) - the largest and longest-running national, publicly available source of health and nutrition data in the United States.

"The data show that the American public is taking advantage of the many beverage innovations being developed by the beverage industry, including the introduction of new no- and low-calorie beverages," Dr. Storey said. "This is good news because consumers are beginning to take advantage of lower-calorie beverage options that can help in balancing energy from calories consumed with energy from calories burned through exercise."

Importantly, Dr. Storey's findings indicate that the beverage marketplace works to anticipate and meet consumer expectations and demands through innovation in product offerings. Key findings of Dr. Storey's research are:

- Consumption of full-calorie soft drinks, milk and 100 percent juice have decreased, compared with her earlier study published in the [Journal of the American Dietetic Association](#) in 2006. The

largest decreases in consumption of full-calorie carbonated beverages are among young boys, ages 6 - 11, and women in their 20s and 30s - both of which decreased their intake by approximately 42 percent.

- Consumption of all diet beverages has increased. In fact, consumption of these beverages increases in the 20s and 30s and then surpasses consumption of full-calorie soft drinks among white females during their 40s.
- Among older women, [coffee](#) and [tea](#) are important sources of hydration as opposed to soft drinks or juice drinks.
- In general, whites tend to drink more diet [soft drinks](#) than do African Americans or Mexican Americans. African Americans tend to drink more juice drinks than do whites and less milk than other populations.

"[Beverages](#) are an important source of hydration for all populations," Storey added. "Making appropriate beverage choices is just as important as eating a balanced diet and getting regular exercise."

Source: American Beverage Association

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