

Energy drinks do not make youngsters smarter, study finds

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Drinking one energy drink has no effect whatsoever on the cognitive performance of secondary school pupils. This is the conclusion reached by University of Twente psychologist Pascal Wilhelm (department of Instructional Technology) and three co-researchers after a study of 103 pupils at a secondary school in the Dutch province of Overijssel. The results of the study will be published in the journal *Tijdschrift voor Psychiatrie*. One particularly unusual aspect of the study is that three of the four researchers were still at school themselves at the time of the study.

The researchers gave three groups of fourth year pupils a large glass of energy drink, fruit squash or water. Flavourings were added to disguise the taste of the energy drink and the squash. Afterwards, the subjects were asked to complete a number of written tests that rely on attention and concentration, [learning and memory](#), verbal and numerical reasoning, numerical aptitude and vocabulary.

The results showed that the energy drink had no beneficial effect whatsoever. The authors – three of whom were still at school at the time – warn that the caffeine in the energy drink can cause headaches and insomnia. In addition, intensive consumption of [energy drinks](#) can increase the risk of drug use. The journal *Pediatrics* previously warned about the health risks to young people.

Dr Wilhelm states "Our research shows that, in terms of [school performance](#), there are no grounds to suggest possible benefits to young

people that would justify these risks." If you are in need of a study boost, Dr Wilhelm and his fellow researchers advise you to drink coffee or, if you don't like coffee, "to imagine that you've just drunk an energy drink – the effect is probably just as powerful."

Provided by University of Twente

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