
Best energy drinks for shift work

What to look for and how to choose a good one





Energy Drink Industry

I want to be crystal clear on my stance with energy drinks.
It's my professional opinion these things are NOT good for us!

However, my personal opinion recognizes that there are often energy drinks in my own fridge at home and many shift workers (mine included) use them to get through a shift or get home safely.

The energy drink industry is worth billions of dollars, and marketers and influencers are great at convincing us that we need their special ingredient combination to give us the boost we're looking for.

This is shift work after all, so it's safe to assume most shift workers have at some time or another used an energy drink to get through a long shift.

Let's go through the side effects, what to look for, and what to avoid.

SIDE EFFECTS OF ENERGY DRINKS

There is no judgement for reaching for a source of caffeine.

Shift work is BRUTAL. Poor sleep, not a lot of healthy choices available at night, lack of time to meal prep, high stress jobs - it all adds up to feeling really tired and looking for a boost. Proceed with caution.

Here's what we need to know about the impacts of caffeine/energy drinks:

- increased mental alertness (that's what we're all here for right?)
- increased performance
- increased blood pressure and heart rate
- possible vision effects
- can cause cardiovascular events (cardiac arrest, arrhythmia)



Too much caffeine (or other ingredients in energy drinks) can lead to:

- insomnia
- jitters
- anxiousness
- fast heart rate
- upset stomach
- nausea
- headache
- a feeling of unhappiness (dysphoria)
- temporary vision loss
- increased risk of miscarriage in pregnancy

THE ENERGY BLEND



While coffee just contains caffeine, energy drinks combine caffeine and other ingredients they call 'energy blends'.

The goal for these ingredients is to give you an additional energy boost synergistically.

These additional ingredients have not been studied robustly for their effectiveness or safety.

If possible, choose energy drinks that DO NOT contain 'energy blend' ingredients as they may have a negative impact on cardiovascular health, especially in high stress situations.

AVOID USE IF:

- high blood pressure
- early pregnancy
- history of heart-related events

What to look for:

1. 150mg caffeine or less.

We can become desensitized to caffeine, meaning it takes more and more to keep us awake and alert. You may need only ~100mg of caffeine at one time for alertness. Keep the doses on the lower end to avoid the negative side effects of too much caffeine.

2. Sweetened with stevia, fruit juice, or cane sugar

While other sweeteners are approved 'safe' by Health Canada, they still may have negative implications on our health long-term.

3. 20g sugar or less

Some energy drinks contain over 50g of sugar, which is brutal on your gut at night and could cause a sugar crash later, especially if consumed on an empty stomach. Limit the amount of sugar coming in from these beverages!

4. Additional vitamins

It's not a bad thing if they add in things like B vitamins, Vitamin C, or Vitamin D. Just know most of these nutrients are easily consumed through food and we don't need to get them from our energy drinks.

5. We DON'T need:

The energy blend ingredients (inositol, taurine, gingseng, guarana) and artificial sweeteners such as erythritol, sucralose or acesulfame potassium (Ace-K)

ENERGY DRINK REVIEW

Quick summary of energy drinks and recommendations

As with anything, your personal preference with energy drinks is a significant factor in what you choose.

We also need to consider price, accessibility, and taste. If it's amazing health-wise but impossible to find, it's still not a great option.

In my recommendations, I'm looking at sugar amount and type of sweetener, amount of caffeine, and type of 'energy blend' ingredients they provide.

Here's what my recommendations mean:

-  Pretty happy with the ingredients, sugar and caffeine content, or sweetener used. This product is a good as it will get 'health-wise'.
-  It's okay. We could do better and we could do worse.
Receives a passing grade of 60-70%.
-  I cannot in good conscience recommend these drinks. The total sugar, caffeine, or energy blend ingredients very likely are detrimental to our health.

My TOP energy drink picks:



ENERGY DRINK REVIEW

Quick summary of energy drinks and recommendations

DRINK	SUGAR/ SWEETENER	CAFFEINE	ENERGY BLEND	  
<u>Alani Nu</u> 	0g sugar Erythritol Sucralose Ace-K	200mg	Inositol Glucuronolactone Guarana Ginseng B vitamins Taurine	
<u>Bang</u> 	0g sugar Sucralose	300mg	Amino acids	
<u>Beaver Buzz</u> 	60g sugar cane sugar *varies by flavour	178mg	Taurine B Vitamins	
<u>Celcius</u> 	0g sugar Sucralose Ace-K	140mg	B vitamins Taurine Glucuronolactone	
<u>c4 Performance</u> 	0g sugar Sucralose Ace-K	200mg	Carnosyn Beta-alanine B vitamins	
<u>Exponent</u> 	0g sugar Erythritol Monk fruit juice Stevia	120mg	Ginseng Guarana Taurine	

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DRINK	SUGAR/ SWEETENER	CAFFEINE	ENERGY BLEND	  
<u>Full Throttle</u> 	High fructose corn syrup	160mg	B Vitamins	
<u>Guru Lite</u> 	7g sugar Cane sugar Monk Fruit Stevia	140mg	Guarana Ginseng	
<u>Guru Original</u> 	30g sugar Cane sugar Grape juice	140mg	Guarana Ginseng	
<u>Guru Energy Water</u> 	Erythritol Stevia	100mg	None	
<u>Joyburst</u> 	Sucralose	100mg	None	
<u>Juicee</u> 	Sucralose	128mg	Taurine B Vitamins Ginseng Inositol B vitamins	

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DRINK	SUGAR/ SWEETENER	CAFFEINE	ENERGY BLEND	  
<u>Monster original</u> 	54g sugar Sugar Glucose Sucralose	166mg	Inositol Glucuronolactone Guarana Ginseng B vitamins Taurine	
<u>Monster Zero</u> <u>Sugar Ultra</u> 	0g sugar Erythritol Sucralose Acesulfame potassium	137mg	B vitamins Taurine Ginseng Glucuronolactone Inositol	
<u>Monster Lo-Carb</u> 	3g sugar Glucose Sucralose Acesulfame potassium	140mg	Inositol Glucuronolactone Guarana Ginseng B vitamins Taurine	
<u>Monster Java</u> 	36g sugar Sucrose Glucose Sucralose	170mg	Inositol Glucuronolactone Guarana Ginseng B vitamins Taurine	
<u>Monster Juice</u> 	33g sugar Sugar Glucose Juice concentrates Sucralose	160mg	Ginseng B vitamins Inositol Taurine L-carnitine	

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DRINK	SUGAR/ SWEETENER	CAFFEINE	ENERGY BLEND	  
<u>Monster Rehab</u> 	5g sugar Glucose Juice concentrate Sucralose Ace-K	158mg	Inositol Guarana B vitamins	
<u>NOS</u> 	53g sugar High fructose corn syrup Sucralose	160mg	B vitamins Taurine Guarana	
<u>NOS Zero sugar</u> 	0g sugar Sucralose Ace-K Erythritol	175mg	B vitamins Taurine Guarana Inositol	
<u>Optimum Nutrition</u> 	0g sugar Sucralose	100mg	Taurine	
<u>Redbull Original</u> 	27g sugar sucrose glucose	80mg (250ml can)	B vitamins Taurine	 (250-355ml cans)

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<u>Redbull Sugar-free</u> 	og sugar sucralose Ace-K	80 mg	B vitamins Taurine	
<u>Redbull Zero</u> 	og sugar erythritol sucralose	80mg	B Vitamins Taurine	
<u>Redbull Editions</u> 	27g sugar sucrose glucose	80mg	B Vitamins Taurine	
<u>Red Rain Energy.</u> 	32g sugar sugar glucose/fructose	113mg	Taurine Glucoronolactone Inositol B vitamins	
<u>Reign sugar-free</u> 	og sugar Sucralose Ace-K	300mg	Ginseng Carnitine	

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<u>Reign Storm</u> 	0g sugar erythritol sucralose	200mg	Ginseng B Vitamins Guarana	
<u>Rockstar original</u> 	63g sugar sugar glucose syrup	160mg	B Vitamins Glucuronolactone Inositol Taurine Ginseng	
<u>Rockstar Sugar free</u> 	0g sugar sucralose Ace-K	160mg	B Vitamins Glucuronolactone Inositol Taurine Ginseng	
<u>Rockstar Pure Zero</u> 	0g sugar erythritol sucralose Ace-K	240mg	B Vitamins Glucuronolactone Inositol Taurine Ginseng	
<u>Rockstar Punched</u> 	61g sugar sugar glucose syrup sucralose	240mg	Taurine Inositol Ginseng Guarana	
<u>Rockstar Recovery</u> 	2g sugar glucose syrup Ace-K sucralose	163mg	Taurine B vitamins Ginseng	

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<u>Rvita</u> 	7g sugar honey juice concentrate	141mg	Guarana	
<u>Sambazon</u> 	29g sugar cane sugar Juice	120mg	Guarana	
<u>Sambazon low calorie</u> 	7g sugar cane syrup erythritol stevia	120mg	Guarana	
<u>Sparkling Ice Energy.</u> 	3g sugar Fruit/vegetable juice Sucralose	160mg	B Vitamins	
<u>Sparkling Ice Caffeine</u> 	0g sugar Sucralose	70mg	B vitamins	

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DRINK	SUGAR/ SWEETENER	CAFFEINE	ENERGY BLEND	  
<u>Vitameau</u> 	2g sugar monk fruit juice concentrate	65mg	None	
<u>Wake Water</u> 	0g sugar	87mg	None	
<u>Zevia</u> 	Stevia leaf	120mg	None	
<u>Zoa</u> 	Sucralose Ace-K	120mg	None	

Thank you for what you do.

I know shift work is brutal on the body. I know that you're tired 97% of the time (not lazy). Choosing between planning for, shopping, and making healthy meals AND sleep AND time with your family is hard.

I'm convinced with simple strategies that actually fit your life and schedule, you can feel totally different than you do right now.

Need help? We know the shift work life, and I'd love to take the food load off your plate.



Interested in more strategies for shift work?

Check out my packages for more details on portion sizes, meal timings, and meal planning strategies for shift work!

www.shiftworknutrition.com

