

MEDIA RELEASE

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Sports Drinks are Gammin!

New campaign urges Aboriginal community to go for water instead

A new digital campaign is using local Aboriginal sporting role models from the Victorian Community to highlight the health effects of regularly downing sports drinks.

Launched today by the Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (VACCHO) and other leading health bodies behind Rethink Sugary Drink, the *Sports Drinks are Gammin!* campaign draws on the experiences of 5 Aboriginal sportspeople to encourage Community members to drink water instead of sugary drinks.

VACCHO Public Health and Research Unit Manager Jimi Peters said: “Gammin can mean fake or not real in our Community. So when we say ‘sports drinks are gammin’, that’s because sports drink companies make their drinks sound really healthy, when actually they’re full of sugar.

“In fact, regular consumption of sports drinks can lead to weight gain and increase the risk of type 2 diabetes, heart and kidney disease, stroke and some cancers. Opt for water instead – it’s free, convenient and the best way to hydrate.

“I also did the maths, and drinking 2 bottles of sports drink a week on average would cost you \$460 a year!

“In this new campaign, we’re hearing from role models from our local Aboriginal Communities, spreading the message that sports drinks are no good for us, they’re gammin! Drink water instead.”

Cancer Council Australia Public Health Committee Chair Craig Sinclair urged teenagers and young adults in particular to be wary of sports drink marketing.

“When we see well-known athletes drinking sports drinks we think they must be the best way to hydrate and boost energy. But with a 600mL bottle serving up more sugar than the average person requires in a whole day, most of us don’t need sports drinks,” Mr Sinclair said.

Shaun Thomas is a professional boxer and proud Palawa man from Cape Barron Island in the Bass Strait who stars in the campaign.

“I’ve had a lot of experience drinking sugary drinks and it hasn’t played out with my performance as an athlete in any way,” Shaun said.

“I completely rate drinking water. It helps with my performance, my health, my muscles”

“I want to be a positive role model and show my Community that sugary sports drinks are not a healthy part of sports.”



How much sugar is in your sports drink?

| Sports drink | Sugar per 100ml | | Sugar per bottle | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|------|------------------|------|
| | Grams | Tsps | Grams | Tsps |
| Maximus 1 litre* | 7.6 | 1.9 | 76 | 19 |
| Powerade Mountain Blast 600mL | 5.8 | 1.5 | 35 | 8.8 |
| Powerade Berry Ice 600mL | 5.8 | 1.5 | 35 | 8.8 |
| Gatorade Lemon Lime 600mL | 6 | 1.5 | 36 | 9 |
| Gatorade Orange Ice 600mL | 6 | 1.5 | 36 | 9 |

Note: 1 teaspoon = 4g

***Sugar includes maltodextrin**

Shaun's tips for cutting back on sports drinks

- Why are sports drinks gammin? Because brands make big promises like 'contains vitamins' or 'quenches thirst' to make their drink sound healthier than it really is. Check out the sugar content on the label, to see how much sugar is in the whole bottle.
- Find out how much sugar is in your favourite sports drink using the table above – it might surprise you. To find out about other sugary drinks visit rethinksugarydrink.org.au/how-much-sugar
- Carry a water bottle, so you don't have to buy a drink if you're thirsty.
- Take your water bottle to the gym or training with you so you're not tempted by sports drinks at the end of your workout.
- Yarn with your kids about why sports drinks are gammin, to tackle the 'pester power' head on.
- Try to avoid going down the soft drink aisle at the supermarket and beware the specials at the petrol station.

About Rethink Sugary Drink: Rethink Sugary Drink is a partnership between the Australian Dental Association, Cancer Council Australia, Dental Health Services Victoria, Dental Hygienists Association of Australia, Diabetes Australia, Heart Foundation, Kidney Health Australia, Nutrition Australia, Obesity Policy Coalition, National Stroke Foundation, the Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (VACCHO) and the YMCA to raise awareness of the amount of sugar in sugar-sweetened beverages and encourage Australians to reduce their consumption. Visit www.rethinksugarydrink.org.au for more information.

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