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# Fitness Management

ISSUES AND SOLUTIONS FOR FITNESS FACILITIES

MARCH 2006

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How to MARKET to OLDER ADULTS  
Profiting from JUICE/SMOOTHIE Bars

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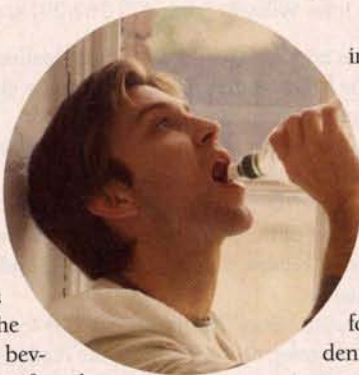
## Q&amp;A

[ BY MATT BRZYCKI ]

**Do sports drinks destroy tooth enamel?**

It has been suggested that sports drinks contribute to dental erosion (which damages tooth enamel). In a pilot study published in the January/February 2005 issue *General Dentistry*, researchers looked at the effects of a variety of popular beverages on human teeth. Enamel blocks were cut from caries-free (or decay-free) teeth, and immersed in the beverages for a total of 14 days. Throughout the immersion period, the sections were weighed every 24 to 48 hours, with the beverages being replaced at each weighing. The researchers found that sports drinks produced a significant amount of enamel erosion.

Obviously, this study didn't simulate real-life conditions. For one thing, people don't keep sports drinks in their mouths for what essentially amounts to 336 consecutive hours. Even the researchers noted that this was comparable to about 13 years' worth of normal drinking. Plus, the teeth were studied in a laboratory, not a mouth, which elim-



inated the protective effects of saliva.

In a study that appeared in a 2002 issue of *Caries Research*, investigators looked at the distribution and severity of dental erosion in 304 collegiate athletes. Of the 279 athletes who regularly consumed sports drink, 101 (36.2 percent) had dental erosion; of the 25 athletes who didn't use sports drinks, 10 (40.0 percent) had dental erosion. In short, those researchers found no relationship between sports drinks and dental erosion. **FM**

**Does caffeine improve performance when exercising?**

Caffeine — a stimulant of the central nervous system — is perhaps the most widely used drug in the world. It's a component of tea, coffee, chocolate and soft drinks, as well as pills to lose weight and com-

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bat drowsiness. It has no significant nutritional value.

Interest in the use of caffeine as a performance enhancer, or "ergogenic aid," was mainly inspired by two studies published in the late 1970s. In those studies, caffeine produced significant improvements in cycling endurance. To date, numerous studies conducted in a laboratory have shown that caffeine increases performance in cycling and running for durations of roughly five to 20 minutes. But studies conducted outside a laboratory have found mixed results. At this time, for example, it doesn't appear as if caffeine improves sprint performance (inside or outside a laboratory).



In low doses, caffeine doesn't pose any serious risks for healthy individuals; when consumed in high doses, caffeine has the potential for many adverse side-effects, such as anxiety, jitters, tremors, inability to focus, gastrointestinal distress, diarrhea, insomnia, irritability and "withdrawal headache." Since caffeine is a potent diuretic (which increases the production of urine), there has been some concern that it can increase the risk of dehydration — a major fear during physical activity, especially in a hot, humid environment. **FM**

## Is there any nutritional value to energy bars that taste like candy bars?

As they say, if something smells like a fish, it's probably a fish. So if an energy bar "tastes like a candy bar," it probably is a candy bar. Or, at best, it's a glorified one. And an expensive one at that.

To determine how much a particular energy bar is like a candy bar, check the nutrition facts panel. Is chocolate one of the first ingredients? Remember, the ingredients are listed by quantity from highest to lowest. Some energy bars are literally coated with chocolate, just like many candy bars. The bar should be low in total fat and saturated fat. It should also be low in sugar. Be advised that sugar can take several forms. Words that end in "ose" — such as dextrose, fructose, galactose, glucose, lactose, levulose, maltose and sucrose — indicate that the ingredient is a sugar. However, not all sugars end in those letters. Two examples are corn syrup and honey. The ingredients may also include "fractionated palm kernel oil," which makes the coating less likely to melt but is high in saturated fat. **FM**

## If an energy bar **TASTES** like a candy bar, it probably is a candy bar.

*Matt Brzycki is coordinator of recreational fitness and wellness programs at Princeton University, Princeton, N.J. He has more than 22 years of experience at the collegiate level and has authored, co-authored or edited 14 books.*

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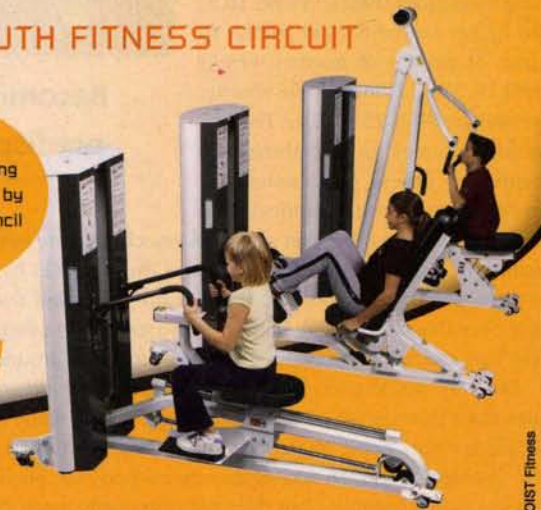
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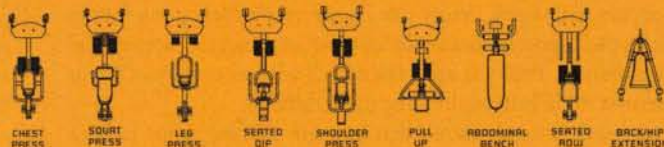


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