Do Sodas Imperil Children's Health?

By ACSH Staff — October 21, 1998


The American Council on Science and Health rejects the Center for Science in the Public Interest's claims that soda necessarily contributes to poor dietary status and/or ill health in children. ACSH President Dr. Elizabeth Whelan and ACSH Director of Nutrition Dr. Ruth Kava offer this perspective:

1. Parents of young children and teens should take seriously their role in educating their children on eating patterns which result in a balanced, varied, moderate diet. In contrast to the position taken by CSPI, there are no good foods or bad foods. The problem is not any one food, but one of dietary immoderation, imbalance and lack of variety.

2. As long as young children or teens consume a well balanced, healthful diet, moderate consumption of soda does not threaten their health or nutritional well being.

3. Too much of anything even a food as innocuous as apple juice can compromise nutritional status by crowding out necessary nutrients. For example, a child who consumes excessive amounts of soda or apple juice may be consuming too few dairy products like milk and thus may suffer a calcium deficiency.

4. It is counterproductive for a group like CSPI to take on the role of food police.