

## STATE SUGAR-SWEETENED BEVERAGE TAXES

A number of studies have shown that relative prices of foods and beverages can lead to changes in how much people consume them.<sup>138, 139, 140</sup> Several studies have estimated that a 10 percent increase in the price of sugar-sweetened beverages (SSBs) (including soft drinks and juices) could reduce consumption of them by 8 percent to 11 percent.<sup>141, 142, 143</sup> As of 2012, the tax rate for every state with a soda tax is 7 percent or below and, of those with a soda tax, 14 states have a tax rate of 5 percent or lower.<sup>144</sup>

Researchers at Yale University estimated that, if a national soda tax of a penny per 12 ounces were instituted, it would generate \$1.5 billion a year, and the Congressional Budget

Office estimated that a federal excise tax of three cents per 12 ounces of SSBs could have generated an estimated \$24 billion in revenue between 2009 and 2013.<sup>145, 146</sup>

- **34 states and Washington, D.C., currently include soda among items for which they charge sales tax:** Alabama, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia and Wisconsin.<sup>147</sup>

## SUGAR-SWEETENED BEVERAGES: CONSUMPTION AND IMPACT

- **Sugar-sweetened beverage consumption:** Consumption of SSBs rose significantly from the 1970s until 1999.<sup>148</sup> From 1999 to 2010, consumption has begun to decline (a decrease of 63 calories for youth and 45 calories for adults.)<sup>149</sup> However, SSB consumption is still high. According to the 2011 BRFSS from six states, almost 25 percent of adults drank SSBs at least once a day and over 10 percent consumed at least two SSBs per day.<sup>150</sup> BRFSS found that odds of drinking SSBs one or more times per day were significantly greater among younger adults; males; Blacks; adults with lower education; low-income adults; and adults who were physically inactive.<sup>151</sup> According to studies through the mid-2000s, 90 percent of children ages 6 to 11 drank an SSB daily, and SSBs were the top calorie source for teens.<sup>152, 153</sup> Nearly half of 2- to 3-year-olds consume a SSB daily, and a quarter to a third consume whole rather than low-fat or nonfat milk.<sup>154, 155, 156, 157</sup> Children ages 2 to 5 are estimated to consume 124 calories per day—7 percent of their total daily energy intake—from SSBs.<sup>158</sup>

- **Increased health risks related to sugar-sweetened beverage consumption:** The growing body of evidence from many studies reveals that regular consumption of SSBs contrib-

utes to weight gain and is also a major contributor to obesity and type 2 diabetes.<sup>159</sup> A number of studies have shown a significant link between SSB consumption and weight gain in children.<sup>160</sup> A recent study found that children who consumed a large amount of SSBs (at least five servings per week) were almost 3.5 times more likely to be obese than those who never or almost never consumed SSBs.<sup>161</sup> Adults who drink a soda or more per day are 27 percent more likely to be overweight than those who do not drink sodas, regardless of income or ethnicity. They also have a 26 percent higher risk for developing type 2 diabetes and a 20 percent higher risk for a heart attack.<sup>162, 163, 164</sup>

- **Improved health from lowering sugar-sweetened beverage consumption:** Children who reduced their consumption of added sugar by the equivalent of one can of soda per day had improved glucose and insulin levels. Eliminating one can of soda per day, regardless of any other diet or exercise change, can reduce a child's risk for type 2 diabetes.<sup>165</sup> An analysis from 1999 to 2010 found that among a representative sample of adults in the United States, intake of SSBs has trended down, and several biomarkers of chronic disease have significantly improved over the past 12 years.<sup>166</sup>