



## Senders Pediatrics Drug Update

November 23, 2010

4 Loko Products - On November 17, 2010, the Food and Drug Administration issued an advisory against drinking 4 Loko beverages. 4 Loko is one of the fastest growing alcoholic beverages on college campuses. It combines caffeine with malt liquor and two other stimulants with an alcohol content of up to 12% or 24 proof (beer is usually 5% alcohol or 10 proof). Coming in 16 ounce cans, it is also larger than the average beer. But what the FDA is most concerned about is that stimulants like caffeine mask the depressant side effects of alcohol leading to excessive consumption. Worse yet, consumers of 4 Loko drinks are often not aware of their degree of inebriation (drunkenness). In a study done at the University of Florida, consumers of 4 Loko were more likely to drive than those drinking standard alcoholic beverages.

In a letter to Phusion Products LLC, the makers of 4 Loko, and to the makers of Joose, Moonshot, Tilt and Core High Gravity, the FDA commented "that there is evidence that the combinations of caffeine and alcohol in these products pose a public health concern". In response, the company has agreed to remove caffeine and the other stimulants from the beverage.

The state of Washington banned 4 Loko earlier this month when 9 Central Washington University students were hospitalized after drinking this beverage, one requiring intensive care. The state of Pennsylvania stopped just short of an outright ban. We have recently hospitalized a college age student with a very damaging alcohol related condition following consumption of 4 Loko. Combined with these national statistics, we feel this is a serious enough threat to recommend that you bring it to the attention of your high school and college age children. Given the internet buzz and the buzz on social media, it is likely that 4 Loko type products will continue to proliferate. It is not unusual for one company to close and another to open selling a very similar product. So buyers beware.

As always, thank you for your continued support of our practice. We look forward to taking care of your family's needs this fall.

Sincerely,

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