

Trend Drink *Bubble Tea* Can Constitute a Health Risk for Small Children

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Bubble Tea is a trend drink made from sweetened green or black tea with added milk or fruit syrup which also contains little balls of starch (bubbles) filled with a sweet liquid. Bubble tea is drunk through a broad straw through which the bubbles are also sucked into the mouth.

The Federal Institute for Risk Assessment (BfR) has dealt with the question of whether a health risk exists for children when drinking bubble tea. It examined in particular the fear that the bubbles could enter the respiratory tract (aspiration).

No aspiration accidents caused by bubble tea have been reported to the BfR to date, but cases of this kind are foreseeable in the opinion of the Institute. Although reports in the press about the first accidents involving bubble tea have not yet been verified by the BfR, they are considered plausible.

Especially with children aged up to four years, there is a risk of foreign objects being accidentally ingested into the lungs. This becomes even more likely when the bubbles are sucked up through a straw. For this reason, the BfR is recommending that a clearly visible reference to this health risk be made wherever bubble tea is sold.

The full version of this BfR Opinion is available in German on <http://www.bfr.bund.de/cm/343/trendgetraenk-bubble-tea-kann-fuer-kleinkinder-ein-gesundheitsrisiko-bergen.pdf>