The purpose of this study was to assess the contents of antimony (Sb) in polyethylene terephthalate (PET) bottles and the specific migration (SM) of the element in 20 commercial samples of soft drinks, gathered on the market in Campinas, SP. Elevated concentrations of Sb in PET bottles are due mainly to the antimony trioxide (Sb$_2$O$_3$) used as the catalyst in the manufacture of PET resin. The technique of Inductively Coupled Plasma – Optical Emission Spectrometry (ICP-OES) was applied for the analyses. The total content of antimony in the PET bottles varied between 11.5 mg.kg$^{-1}$ and 650 mg.kg$^{-1}$, and the SM of the antimony of the bottle to the simulant acetic acid 3% (w/v) was lower than the quantification limit of the method (LOQ) (23.5 μg.L$^{-1}$). The results indicate that all the packages evaluated abide by the specific migration limit (SML) of antimony established by ANVISA, corresponding to 40 μg.L$^{-1}$. However, one should consider the importance and the consequences of the quantity of Sb present in PET bottles in relation to the environmental issue.

Key words: soft drinks, PET, antimony, ICP-OES and migration.