



...because health matters!

Nutrition Matters

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You Should Know About Caffeine



Is your day filled with sips of coffee or tea? Do you have children who drink lots of pop? Are you pregnant or planning to become pregnant?

If your answer is yes to one or more of these questions, read this newsletter to learn some facts about caffeine... what it is, where it is found, and how harmful is it?

The Morning Charge

Millions of us start our day with coffee or hot tea. Some for the flavour, but many drink it for the caffeine lift. Caffeine is a drug, that acts as a stimulant on the central nervous system. This is why you may feel more alert and less tired after your morning cup of tea or coffee. Usually 200 to 240 milligrams of caffeine are needed to produce stimulating effects. Although some people may require more or less to get this effect.

Sources of Caffeine

Caffeine is naturally present in coffee, tea, chocolate, cocoa and often added to soft drinks. The amount present can vary greatly. For example, there are differences among brands and types of soft drinks. Brewing time and method of preparation make a big difference in the caffeine content of coffee or tea.

Are you Getting too Much?

There are two ways to check if you are getting too much caffeine:

- 1) Use the chart on this page to see how much caffeine you consume daily. Researchers tell us that most people can take in up to 400 mg of caffeine a day without causing any serious health problems.

- 2) Remove all sources of caffeine from your diet for one day. If a throbbing headache occurs one day later and can only be relieved by more caffeine, then chances are, you are suffering from caffeine withdrawal.

How Much Caffeine Do You Consume?

	Milligrams of Caffeine
Coffee (250 mL or 8 oz)	
Filter drip	179
Brewed	137
Iced cappucino (10 oz)	87
Instant regular	76-106
Instant decaffeinated	2-6
Tea (178 mL or 6 oz)	
Weak (bag)	20- 45
Strong (bag)	79-110
Other Tea (8 oz)	
Green Tea	30
Iced Tea	15
Cola Drinks* (355 mL)	
Diet Coke, Diet Pepsi	50
Pepsi-Cola, Coca-cola & Dr. Pepper	37
Energy Drinks	
Red Bull (250 mL or 8 oz)	80
Dew Fuel (355 mL)	49
Chocolate	
Chocolate candy bar (45 g)	11-23
Hot chocolate (250 mL or 8 oz)	5-9
Chocolate milk (250 mL/1 cup)	5-8

*Soft drinks that clearly state "caffeine-free" do not contain caffeine.

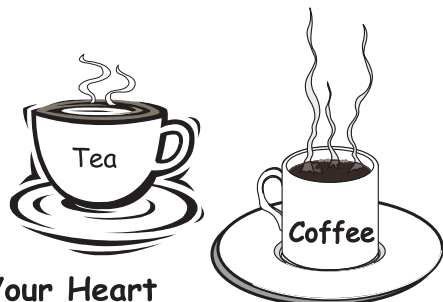
More Facts About the Effects of Caffeine

Side effects of consuming too much caffeine are tremors, nervousness, and irritability.

People often drink coffee thinking it will "sober them up" after drinking alcohol. Instead, you end up with a wide awake drunk whose poor coordination and reaction times may well lead to a car accident if he drives.

Caffeine frequently delays you getting to sleep; causes more night-time awakenings, and you sleep less soundly. Check your sleeping habits and caffeine intake to see if you are affected.

Caffeine may cause extra stomach secretions which will give you an empty, hungry feeling. If you are trying to watch your weight, this may cause you to eat more.



Caffeine and Your Heart

There has been some confusion about the effects of caffeine on your heart. The best advice at the moment is to check with your doctor if you are concerned about your blood pressure or cholesterol levels.

Caffeine and Cancer

Overall studies have failed to link caffeine intake and bladder, pancreatic or ovarian cancer. More research needs to be done.

Advice for Pregnant Women

In human studies, caffeine intake did not increase the risk of low birth weight, premature birth or birth defects.

But, we do know: Caffeine is a stimulant and has a definite drug effect. Caffeine crosses the placenta and reaches the fetus and appears in breast milk. Effects on the baby include increased breathing rate, anxiety, and depression. Therefore, if you are pregnant or breastfeeding, it is suggested that you limit your caffeine intake to 1 or 2 cups of coffee a day - no more than 300 mg/day.



Kids and Caffeine

Are your kids getting too much caffeine? Check what they eat each day. How often are they drinking pop, eating chocolate, or drinking chocolate milk? So far, no one knows the effects of too much caffeine on children's behaviour or the development of their nervous system. But, we do know, that too often, pop replaces milk or water at mealtimes and as thirst-quenchers. This is hazardous to their health as they are getting sugary calories at the expense of needed nutrients. The following chart indicates maximum caffeine intake levels for children.

Age	Caffeine
4 - 6 yrs.	45 mg/day
7 - 9 yrs.	62.5 mg/day
10 - 12 yrs.	85 mg/day