

Is Caffeine Really Good For You?

By Obi Obadike

Sometimes when we wake up in the morning we're just not as energetic as we would like to be, and at times, we all gravitate towards caffeine as a means to jump start our body; whether it be a cup of coffee, or an energy drink. There are even some people who live off of caffeine throughout the day. This begs the questions; is there really a limit to how much caffeine we should consume in a day? Furthermore, do the benefits of caffeine outweigh the risks of consuming it?

Research on Caffeine

Recent studies have shown that consuming coffee specifically, and caffeinated beverages in general, has some positive health-related benefits. A thorough and exhaustive longitudinal study that was conducted at Harvard University recently on 126,000 people over an 18 year period showed that people who consumed one to three cups of coffee per day were up to 9% less likely to become diabetic. Other studies have shown the following:

- Regular coffee drinkers are 80% less likely to develop Parkinson's disease
- 2 cups of coffee a day equates to a 20% decreased risk of developing colon cancer
- 2 cups of coffee a day leads to an 80% drop in liver cirrhosis
- 2 cups of coffee a day prevents gallstone development by 50%

Based on the research, it looks like a minimum of at least 2 cups of coffee a day will somewhat surprisingly decrease your chances of developing many diseases. Other purported benefits of drinking coffee include improved asthma, cavity prevention and even headache alleviation. The health benefits of coffee far outweigh the risks because of the healthful properties of the coffee bean.

Overconsumption of Caffeine

Like anything in life though, if you over consume something; it will be hazardous to your health. The risks of caffeine are heightened when a person consumes 4 to 7 cups (or more) of coffee per day, which is considered heavy daily use. Some of the problems that could stem from overconsumption of caffeine include the following:

- Insomnia
- Irritability
- Headaches
- Fast or irregular heartbeat
- Anxiety
- Muscle Tremors
- Nervousness
- Gastrointestinal problems

All in Moderation

The end result is to consume coffee within moderation, which will allow you to reap its health

benefits, without being exposed to the risks associated with overconsumption. So, if you wake up in the morning and the first thing you think about is drinking a cup of coffee, don't stress because that's not a bad thing whatsoever! In fact, you should incorporate coffee or green tea daily

to consistently reap the long term health benefits. **IFM**



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