



Caffeine



Q: What is caffeine?

A: Caffeine is a stimulant that causes an increased heart rate, respiratory rate, blood pressure and alertness. Caffeine is produced in the leaves and seeds of many plants. It can be found in tea leaves, coffee beans, chocolate, many sodas, pain relievers, and over the counter medications.

Q: Are there any health risks associated with caffeine intake?

A: Many studies have linked caffeine and health issues like cancer, cardiovascular disease and osteoporosis. Too much caffeine can cause symptoms associated with anxiety: sweating, tenseness, and inability to concentrate. Caffeine may also contribute to painful but benign fibrocystic breast disease. No evidence has been found to link moderate caffeine intake to these or other health risks.

Q: How much coffee should I have as an adult?

A: For most healthy adults, 200-300 mg of caffeine per day (about 2-3 cups of coffee) pose no physical problems.

Q: How does caffeine affect children?

A: Children are especially sensitive to caffeine's effects because they are small and, at first, not adapted to its use. Therefore, children should not have caffeine. Parents should be aware of the caffeine in items their children favor such as chocolate bars, colas, and other soft drinks.

Q: How does caffeine affect pregnant women?

A: Pregnant women should exercise moderation in using caffeine. Caffeine can cross the placenta barrier, and the fetus has only a limited ability to break it down.

Q: What are some ways I can cut back on my caffeine intake?

A: First, reduce caffeine intake slowly, so your body can adjust. Also, try these ideas:

- ✓ You can mix decaffeinated coffee with your regular coffee.
- ✓ You can drink a latte with more low-fat milk than coffee.
- ✓ You can brew tea for less time.
- ✓ Try drinking water and juice instead of soda.
- ✓ If you want a caffeine-free boost, try physical activity to get you going in the mornings.



Q: What is the caffeine content of some beverages and foods?

Beverages/Food	Average Caffeine
5 oz. Coffee brewed (Drip method)	115 mg.
5 oz. Instant Coffee	74 mg.
5 oz. Decaffeinated coffee (Brewed/Instant)	3 mg.
5 oz. Tea brewed (U.S. brands)	40 mg.
5 oz. Tea brewed (Imported)	60 mg.
5 oz. Instant Tea	30 mg.
12 oz. Iced Tea	70 mg.
12 oz. Coca Cola	45 mg.
12 oz. Pepsi	37 mg.
12 oz. Mountain Dew	55 mg.
12 oz. Diet Pepsi	35 mg.
5 oz. Cocoa beverage	4 mg.
8 oz. Chocolate milk	5 mg.
1 oz. Milk chocolate	6 mg.
1 oz. Dark chocolate, semi-sweet	20 mg.
1 oz. Chocolate flavored syrup	4 mg.
1 oz. Baker's chocolate	26 mg.