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Food For Thought: Tea Is A Satisfying Part Of A Healthy Diet

By News Canada

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(NC)—Tea news continues to stir the pot in Canada. Records show we drink as many as 7 billion cups of tea each year - and those who study it as a dietary factor are now telling us not to put on the brakes. Both black tea and green tea contain antioxidant plant compounds called flavonoids, which are thought to be important cancer fighting agents. This, combined with its potential benefits against heart disease - plus zero calories and comparatively low levels of caffeine - is a sound reason to treat oneself to one or more cups of tea every day.

And while those who drink the 7 billion cups don't seem to need advice, still connoisseurs insist on preparation precision to make the "tea treat" even better. Here, courtesy of the Tea Association of Canada, is a 5-step process for the perfect cup of tea:

Make A Perfect Cup of Tea

1. Start with fresh-drawn cold water and bring it to a rolling boil.
2. Warm the teapot to help keep your tea hot longer.
3. Use one teabag for each two cups of tea desired. Be sure to choose a quality blend.
4. When the water has boiled, take the warmed teapot to the kettle and pour over the teabags. Stir, cover and let steep for 3 to 5 minutes.
5. Remove teabags and pour.

And don't forget, you can get a perfect cup of tea when on the run too. In a restaurant, ask for your pot of boiling water with the "tea bag in". Always allow your tea, no matter where you are, to steep for at least three to five minutes. Indeed, continuously dunking the tea bag may increase the flavonoid

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content as much as five times.

Remember, in addition to antioxidant properties, tea is an all-natural beverage with no additives, artificial flavourings or colours. It has no calories when enjoyed without milk, sugar or honey. Here are a few innovative ways to include tea in your daily meals:

- At breakfast, discover how delicious a bran muffin can be with your favourite blend like Orange Pekoe, Earl Grey and English Breakfast and many more.
- At lunch, use tea to flavour dressings on fruit, green, and pasta salads.
- At dinner, use brewed tea as a marinade for chicken or fish and also to stir-fry vegetables. Try ice cream flavoured with a splash of tea.
- At snack time, discover how green tea is an ideal refresher.

More information is available online at

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Want Fries With That Mister

By Jenny Mathers

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Yes, my healthy diet has at times suffered at the hands of fast food, I admit it - I am addicted to fast food - it makes me feel good, it makes us all feel good, that's why its everywhere and thats why the fast food chains make millions.

But let's face it, it's not that simple to be disciplined and no one's going to go to a restaurant with friends and tell the restaurant that they can't eat that rice because its white rice and it'll send my blood sugar levels sky high and release insulin into my body, can I have basmati instead ? - well, maybe just the hardcore diet enthusiasts.

So what to do about fast food nutrition - well, I am going to give you my five most important principles for choosing food generally, but also quick things to look for when you're out in order to complement your healthy diet:

1. Find Out How The Food Was Cooked. It's not the actual food that matters, it's the way it was cooked. Little things like this can make a world of difference.
2. Drink Lots Of Water. When you're out, have a water bottle close by - you'd be surprised what a difference it makes.
3. If it doesn't look natural, then it probably won't do your diet much good. Generally the more processed a food is, the more likely that it will be absorbed into your body very quickly and will not give you sustained energy. If it looks like it's gone through a lot of processes before reaching you, then give it a miss.
4. Steer away from unhealthy fats and highly processed carbs when you eat out. This is nothing new, don't eat those fries with that burger. But I have two very good reasons for saying this. If you successfully navigate your way away from these two - you will be doing a lot for keeping bad cholesterol levels at bay and staving off accidental over-consumption of calories.
5. Go for raw. There is nothing more satisfying than knowing that the food you've just eaten is burning calories even as you sit at the café talking with friends. It's even confidence building to know that you have a healthy diet. The food that will do this is quite often raw and are adorned with fat burning principles because they have low energy density (as described above).

So step back from those fries, and consider that there are plenty of satisfying, tasty and healthy alternatives when snacking or dining out. Instituting these healthy diet principles will mean that your social life and weight loss goals are not an either / or situation.

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