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Health Benefits of Tea

By Jason Ditto

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Tea: It Does the Body Good

Studies that support the health benefits of tea drinking keep filling the headlines. There's simply no denying that a daily spot of tea does the body good.

Even though researchers can't quite agree on every aspect, I'm sold on the fact that a few cups a day will do its best to protect me from heart disease, a stroke, cancer, and more.

What Makes Tea Good for the Body?

Tea contains high levels of antioxidants, some of which are called polyphenols, flavonoids, and catechins, and all of which take on the "free radicals" in the body and prevent them from harming the healthy cells on board.

In other words, sending in antioxidants is disease prevention in its finest form. Antioxidants are ready and waiting not only in teas but also in several fruits, vegetables, nuts, meats, and even wines (see my health benefits of wine article).

If that were not enough, tea also contains flouride which benefits your teeth and has bacteria killing properties which helps control bad breath and the formation of plaque.

Are All Teas Equally Good for the Body?

This is a question researchers are still squabbling over. Does green tea have more antioxidants than black tea? Should I drink instant tea or loose leaf tea for better health benefits? Is hot tea better than iced tea? And here's what it comes down to: Higher quality teas may have more catechin antioxidants than lower quality teas. White tea has more antioxidants than any other tea. Green tea has more

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catechin antioxidants than black tea since black tea goes through more processing. Unfermented rooibos tea has more polyphenol antioxidants than fermented rooibos. Freshly brewed teas have more polyphenol antioxidants than instant or bottled teas. More researchers seem to agree that brewed (cold or hot) or caffeinated tea has more antioxidants than instant teas.

Here's a short preview of the hundreds of recent studies that boast the health benefits of tea and its antioxidants:

Heart Benefits: Study finds tea drinkers have lower blood pressure (Archives of Internal Medicine, 2004). Tea may lower cholesterol and protect against heart disease (Journal of Nutrition, 2003). Black tea may lower "bad" cholesterol (United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Beltsville Human Nutrition Research Center, 2003). Tea consumption may help heart disease patients (Circulation: The Journal of the American Heart Association, 2001).

Cancer Prevention: Green tea could help stem esophageal cancer. (Harvard Medical School, 2004). Green and black tea can slow down the spread of prostate cancer (Center for Human Nutrition at UCLA's David Geffen School of Medicine, 2004). Tea may protect against cancer caused by smoking. (Journal of Nutrition, 2003). Green tea and white tea fight colon cancer (Linus Pauling Institute at Oregon State University study, Carcinogenesis, 2003). Hot tea may lower risk of some skin cancers (University of Arizona study, Cancer Epidemiology, Biomarkers and Prevention (Vol. 9, No. 7), 2001). Green tea consumption may lower stomach cancer risk (University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA) School of Public Health study, International Journal of Cancer (Vol. 92: 600–604), 2001).

Hypertension–Reducing Benefits: Green and oolong teas reduce risk of hypertension (National Cheng Kung University study, Archives of Internal Medicine, 2004).

Immunity–Boosting Benefits Tea believed to boost the body's defenses (Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, 2003)

Leukemia–Fighting Benefits: A green tea component helps kill leukemia cells (Mayo Clinic, 2004).

Alzheimer's–Fighting Benefits: Drinking tea might delay Alzheimer's Disease (Newcastle University's Medicinal Plant Research Centre study, Phytotherapy Research, 2004).

AIDS–Fighting Benefits: Tea may play a role as an AIDS fighter (University of Tokyo, Journal of Allergy and Clinical Immunology, 2003).

In Conclusion:

So how do you get started in doing your body some good with tea?

To get the most health benefits out of your teas, choose high–quality loose leaf teas from your local or online tea shop. Brew it up and enjoy. And of course, don't throw out the idea of enjoying instant or bottled teas when you're on the go. You just might have to drink a little more.

Don't wait any longer. Sip, savor, and fight disease today. It's never too late to enjoy the many health benefits of tea!

Jason Ditto
Author of the

website about the enjoyment of coffee, tea, wine and beer.

Is Black Tea Good For Your Health?

By Rene Graeber

For thousands of years, the Chinese people have been drinking tea because of its refreshing and soothing effects. Like all three of the major Asian teas in the market, black tea comes from the plant called *Camellia sinensis*. But the difference between the tea types lies in how the leaves are processed, not on where they come from.

In the case of black tea, the leaves are first dried and then fermented. Black tea undergoes full oxidation, which actually accounts for its aromatic and rich taste. Compared to green tea and oolong or black dragon tea, black tea has a fuller taste and tastes better with age.

However, black tea is not only known for its intriguing flavor (comparable to wine!). New research suggests that it may be a major contributor of health-promoting nutrients in the U.S. diet.

Black tea health benefits lies in the presence of flavonoids in tea. Before, scientists believed that the process of fermentation changed the beneficial flavonoid polyphenol in black tea into another form, which is not thought to have any beneficial effects at all. However, newer studies showed that polyphenol or not, black tea health benefits can certainly do you a lot of good.

Below are the top five black tea health benefits enjoyed by those who love their cup of tea every morning:

Antioxidants

This is actually the one black tea health benefit you can get from drinking tea. Antioxidants are substances commonly found in vegetables, fruits, and beverages such as tea. Because of their disease-fighting abilities, antioxidants have been the subject of various scientific studies investigating their many benefits, from heart disease to cancer prevention.

Think of antioxidants as the rust-oleum paint that you put on your outdoor furniture to keep it from rusting. Just as oxygen in the air around us cause iron to rust, the oxygen particles in our blood can sometimes be destructive. In scientific circles, they call these highly reactive oxygen-containing substances as free radicals, and they are the reason why our body undergo massive cellular damage as we age or undergo degenerative diseases like cancer and heart illness.

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The function of black tea health benefit antioxidants is to seek out these free radicals and destroy them. In so doing, these black tea health benefit antioxidants help protect your body from the ravages of aging and the effects of pollution.

Caffeine

Unless you consider yourself a coffee connoisseur, one black tea health benefit that you would surely appreciate is its caffeine content. Black tea does the job that your coffee does - that is, to give you a little push as you wake up in the morning after pulling up an all-nighter. But while coffee has the unfortunate reputation of causing heart palpitations because of too much drinking (and hence, too much caffeine), your chance of suffering the same with drinking black tea is nil. That's because black

tea has two to three times less caffeine than coffee. An eight-ounce cup of coffee contains around 135 mg. caffeine, while black tea contains only 30 to 40 mg. per cup.

Rene Graeber graduated from the University of Munich in Educational and Sports Science and from the Paracelsus School of Medicine in Hamburg from Naturopathic Medicine. If you're looking for helpful information about alternative medicine visit his website at

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