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## Coffee - The Health Benefits of Drinking Coffee

By [Timothy S. Collins](#) ★

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Drinking coffee daily is a normal routine for more than 108 million Americans consumers, including the majority of US adults and a growing number of children. Is this habit good for our health or is it harmful?

Coffee has been the subject of research for decades and the results consistently show that coffee is more healthful than harmful. Research takes place daily on coffee, caffeine and health around the world. Hundreds, if not more, of new studies are published every month by scientists and research institutes worldwide.

Coffee has two main ways of improving the health of your body: antioxidants and caffeine. Both of these substances have health and anti aging benefits. Antioxidants help your body repair damage to cells caused by free radicals. These free radicals are produced as a by-product of cells through normal daily activities.

**The health benefits of coffee are many and the research supports them.** For example,

**ASTHMA RELIEF:** caffeine can help manage asthma and even control attacks when medication is not available. Did you know that a single dose of pain reliever such as Anacin or Excedrin contains up to 120 milligrams of caffeine? This is the equivalent of a hefty cup of coffee.

**CAVITY PROTECTION:** caffeine can prevent cavities because of a compound called trigonelline which gives coffee its aroma and bitter taste. Trigonelline has both anti-bacterial and anti-adhesive properties that help prevent dental cavities from forming.

**CHOLESTEROL:** a paper filter is worth a "pound of cure" or so. There are two substances in coffee, kahweol and cafestol, that raise cholesterol levels. During the brewing process, paper filters capture these substances. Paper filters, in this case, help in the prevention of harmful cholesterol levels. Coffee drinkers who drink non-filtered coffees

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such as "lattes," which do not use paper filters, may want to reconsider their choice and frequency of beverage for their own health benefit.

**COLON CANCER:** drinking at least two cups of coffee daily can translate into a 25% reduced risk of colon cancer. Coffee drinkers, as compared to non coffee drinkers, appear to be 50% less likely to get liver cancer. They also have lower rates of colon, breast and rectal cancers. There is a powerful antioxidant found almost exclusively in coffee, methylpyridinium, that boosts blood enzymes widely believed to protect against colon cancer. Methylpyridinium is formed in the roasting process from a chemical found naturally in coffee beans. Dark roasted coffees contain two to three times more of this antioxidant than medium roasts.

**CIRRHOSIS:** coffee drinkers have up to 80% reduced risk to suffer from cirrhosis than non coffee drinkers. People who smoke and are heavy drinkers have less liver damage as compared to those who do not. The reduced risk of alcohol cirrhosis may be associated with the phenolics and related substances in coffee.

**DEMENTIA:** drinking coffee during middle age may reduce the risk of Alzheimer's disease and the risk of dementia in the elderly. Coffee drinkers at midlife have a lower risk for dementia or Alzheimer's later in life than people who drank little or no coffee at midlife. Moderate coffee drinkers had up to a 65% decrease risk of contracting these conditions as compared with low coffee drinkers.

**GALLSTONES:** certain compounds in coffee may help prevent liquid stored in the gallbladder ("bile") from crystallizing or hardening. This is what causes gallstones and obstructs the bile duct, a narrow tube which leads from the gallbladder to the intestine. Gallstones are painful and patients can experience fever and jaundice. Coffee drinkers have almost a 50% reduced risk of suffering from gallstone disease as compared to non coffee drinkers.

**HEART DISEASE:** People who smoke and are heavy coffee drinkers have less heart disease as compared to those who do not. Drinking coffee as part of a healthy and balanced diet is not associated with the development of cardiovascular problems, including atherosclerotic disease, myocardial infarction, ventricular arrhythmias and hypertension.

**MENTAL ALERTNESS:** caffeine enhances concentration, reduces fatigue and heightens alertness. The reason lies in caffeine's effect on brain receptors, enabling a better energy uptake.

**MALE FERTILITY:** caffeine in coffee appears to increase sperm "motility." Motility is the speed at which sperm moves. Since sperm hyperactivity is critical to fertilization, heightened motility increases the odds of pregnancy.

**PARKINSON'S DISEASE:** antioxidants and caffeine have health and anti-aging benefits. Antioxidants repair the damage to cells caused by free radicals. People who drink coffee on a regular basis are up to 80% less likely to develop Parkinson's disease. Caffeine's adenosine-blocking power may be one mechanism through which the brain cells in Parkinson's disease are protected. Based on this and other evidence, Parkinson's drugs are being developed that contain a derivative of caffeine. However, it seems that coffee protects men better than women against Parkinson's disease. This is because estrogen and caffeine need the same enzymes to be metabolized and estrogen captures those enzymes.

**TYPE 2 DIABETES:** drinking one to three cups of coffee daily can reduce diabetes risk by single digits. Drinking six cups or more each day can reduce men's risk up to 60% and women's' up to 30% as compared to non coffee drinkers. Coffee has large amounts of antioxidants such as Chlorogenic acid and tocopherols. Coffee also has minerals such as magnesium. All these components improve insulin sensitivity, glucose metabolism and lower blood sugar.

*The good news about coffee and health keeps getting better.* Coffee and caffeine are recognized for their positive health benefits and potential functional food attributes. Obviously, check with your own physician regarding any medical conditions, treatments, diagnostics, pregnancy or special dietary plans for you.

*Go ahead and drink coffee.* In the process, you will derive some health benefits. Enjoy a cup of Panama Boquete specialty coffee!

Timothy ("Tim") S. Collins, the author, is called by those who know him "Gourmet Coffee Guy."

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He is an expert in article writing who has done extensive research online and offline in his area of expertise, coffee marketing, as well as in other areas of personal and professional interest.



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