

# ★ COFFEE ANYONE? ★

By John Clark, MD



Coffee is the most popular beverage in the world, with more than 400 billion cups being consumed each year.<sup>2</sup>

## Having trouble “breaking the ice”?

Interesting fact: people in social situations holding a hot cup of coffee perceive their social interactions as warmer.<sup>1</sup> Just meet up with your friends at the local coffee shop, or invite friends over and serve the best freshly brewed coffee and watch the ice melt away.

## Popularity

Seriously, coffee is the most popular beverage in the world, with more than 400 billion cups being consumed each year.<sup>2</sup> Why do so many people like coffee? Is it just the energy they get--the boost that keeps them fueled for the rest of the day? Yes, but there’s more. It is “conversational”; people feel there is nothing more inviting and comforting than conversations over coffee. They love coffee because it can be shared and it’s usually a catalyst for great discussions! For some it helps them relax and de-stress. Then there is the aroma and people like the aroma so well that coffee even gets added to other things just for the olfactory appeal. Although it may be an acquired taste, many love the flavor of coffee. And there are just so many different brewing methods and flavors, the exploration can be

boundless. Everyone seems to have their own favorite latte, brew or brand.<sup>3</sup>

Americans consume 400 million cups of coffee per day making the United States the leading coffee consumer of the world. Among coffee drinkers, the average consumption in the United States is 3 cups a day.<sup>4</sup>

## Economics

To illustrate the economic impact of coffee, it is the second most globally traded commodity behind crude oil.<sup>5</sup> The advertising budget alone of coffee is more than the entire yearly research budget of the National Institute of Health.

With such wide popularity, and economic power, is it any wonder that the news is replete with health and psychological accolades for this simple bean beverage. And just like wine, chocolate, tobacco<sup>6</sup> and organic unfiltered apple cider vinegar, journalism has magically transformed these dubious health tonics into wonderful perpetuators of eternal youth. Don’t we all have itching ears for tales expounding the virtues of our pet vices?

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## Why do so many people like coffee?

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### Dependence

But let's face it; one day without coffee and proof of your dependence and addiction will emerge in symptoms of headache, fatigue, decreased energy/activeness, decreased alertness, drowsiness, decreased contentedness, depressed mood, difficulty concentrating, irritability, and feeling foggy/not clearheaded.<sup>7</sup> So, if it feels so good, then why does it bite so hard and hang on so tenaciously?

The secret lies in what it shares with cocaine, nicotine, amphetamines and heroin<sup>8,9</sup>, the ability to stimulate you physically and psychologically. Stimulants are habit forming, addictive and foster enslaving dependence. You'll find yourself doing anything to have just one more sip, even if you have to take it out of the sight of prying eyes.

"Tea and coffee produce an immediate effect. Under the influence of these poisons the nervous system is excited; and in some cases, for the time being, the intellect seems to be invigorated, the imagination more vivid. Because these stimulants produce such agreeable results, many conclude that they really need them; but there is always a reaction.

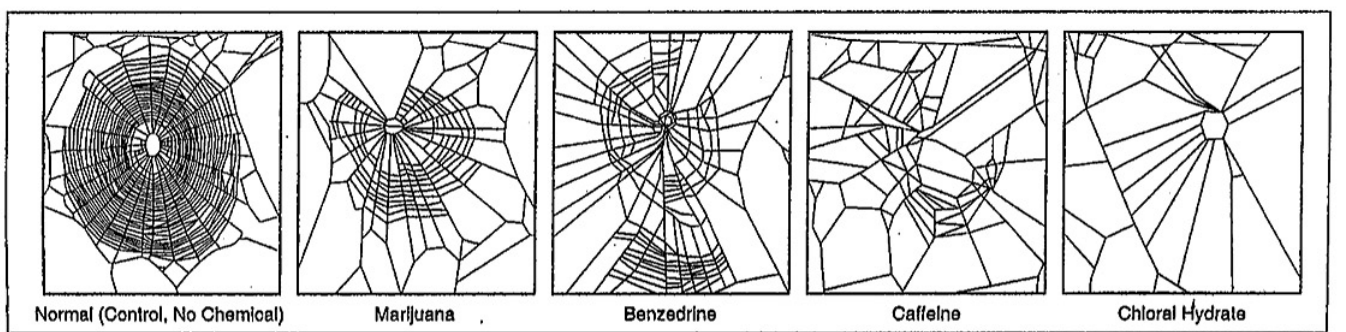
The nervous system has borrowed power from its future resources for present use, and all this temporary invigoration is followed by a corresponding depression. The suddenness of the relief obtained from tea and coffee is an evidence that what seems to be strength is only nervous excitement, and consequently must be an injury to the system."<sup>10</sup>

### Doesn't everyone need a little pep now and then to get the brain going and the ambition in gear?

You might ask, "Doesn't everyone need a little pep now and then to get the brain going and the ambition in gear?" Well, if it is the brain you're trying to rouse, I have news for you; early functional gains soon disappear,<sup>11</sup> and over time, especially as you get older, performance suffers with losses in executive function and slowing of mental processing speed.<sup>12</sup> In the end coffee really does not improve net alertness, it merely returns addicts to the original baseline from which they first started, if and only if they keep using, and using, and using....<sup>13</sup>

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# MENTAL PERFORMANCE



The Web Spun by an *Araneus diadematus* (House Spider) is altered when the spider is exposed to chemicals. The alterations can be quantified and used as measures of toxicity.

To assess mental performance in an animal model, NASA researchers treated spiders, which normally spin very symmetrical webs, with various chemicals and drugs. Test chemicals included: marijuana (street drug), Benezdrine (an amphetamine), caffeine (of coffee fame), and chloral hydrate (sleeping medication). Web symmetry and completeness deteriorated dramatically with each substance. What may surprise you, as it did me, was that spiders spun worse webs on caffeine than they did on marijuana and amphetamines. Only chloral hydrate came close to equaling caffeine's impact on web degeneration.<sup>14</sup> Subsequent studies have shown that it takes spiders four (4) whole days to return to normal web building after caffeine dosing. What does that say for coffee users and mental performance for the four days following use?

Did you know that the caffeine in just one cup of coffee will shut down the blood flow to your brain by 30%?<sup>15,16,17</sup> Especially to the frontal lobes?<sup>18</sup> The frontal lobes of your brain are where people do their higher thinking; where they discriminate right from wrong; where their conscience resides; and without them they lose their moral compass. Our frontal lobes are what distinguish us from a monkey: it's a distinction we want to maintain. Just one cup of coffee can make a person more likely to share information with others (gossip) that they would otherwise have been careful to keep confidential.<sup>19</sup> The moral of that story is: don't let coffee make a monkey out of you.

"The brain nerves which communicate with the entire system are the only medium through which Heaven can communicate to man, and affect his inmost life.

Whatever disturbs the circulation of the electric currents in the nervous system, lessens the strength of the vital powers, and the result is a deadening of the sensibilities of the mind."<sup>20</sup>

This dampening effect on higher mental function has huge impacts on teenagers, where caffeine significantly increases violent behaviors and conduct disorders for both girls and boys.<sup>21</sup> What does this say for the modern rise in Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder and school dropout rates?

## Sleep and fatigue

Short on sleep? Tired all the time? Caffeine consumption results in decreased sleep quantity and quality.<sup>22,23</sup> Coffee also decreases the secretion of melatonin, the principal hormone that regulates sleep.<sup>24</sup> Melatonin is also an important hormone for a strong immune system, for the fight against cancer and autoimmune diseases.



For those aware of their addictive weaknesses, tea and coffee foster the appetite for stronger stimulants. Caffeine, as found in coffee, is referred to as a “gateway drug”, meaning that the breakdown of the barriers to addictive behaviors in caffeine dependence opens the way for the breakdown of barriers to addictive behaviors leading to alcohol and tobacco dependence or worse.<sup>25</sup> The reverse is also true, if you are trying to rid yourself of some other enslaving habit such as smoking, also stopping caffeine use is important in your quest for recovery.<sup>26,27,28.</sup>

## Vitamins and Minerals

Doesn't coffee possess dietary benefits? Is there some nutrient you need that only coffee is really good at fulfilling? Not for vitamins and minerals. Consumers of caffeinated beverages have long been associated with deficiencies of calcium,<sup>29</sup> B vitamins,<sup>30</sup> and Iron<sup>31,32,33</sup>. Maybe this is also why they are not good blood builders. People consuming them have been known to become anemic.<sup>34</sup>

## If you are trying to quit smoking, caffeine cessation is key to your recovery.<sup>26-28</sup>

### Calcium, Bone Loss and Hormones

An apple a day may keep the doctor away, but a cup of coffee a day certainly won't. One caffeinated drink increases the urinary excretion of calcium for at least 3 hours.<sup>35</sup> In one study, calcium loss doubled in almost everyone who used caffeine.<sup>36</sup> Therefore, it should not surprise you that caffeine is associated with increased calcium loss from the bones, an important risk factor for osteoporosis.<sup>37</sup> Perhaps you are thinking, “I'll just drink decaffeinated coffee instead”. Studies show no benefit for the decaffeinated option, osteoporosis still occurs.<sup>38</sup> For men, caffeine decreases bone-preserving testosterone.<sup>39</sup> So, if you're not feeling like a man anymore, or you just don't seem to be able to get her pregnant, tip the cup.<sup>40,41</sup>

## Pregnancy and Fertility

Caffeine and reproductive health don't mix. Caffeine consumption during pregnancy can result in a lower birth weight,<sup>42</sup> childhood bone complications, slower fetal growth,<sup>43</sup> miscarriages,<sup>44,45</sup> stillbirth and infant death.<sup>46,47</sup> What's more, moms consuming caffeine during pregnancy could come up short on future grandchildren, coffee impacts their children's fertility too.<sup>48</sup>

### Refreshing?

Some people believe that when they are thirsty any drink will suffice, but scientific studies show that caffeine is a diuretic and actually has the opposite effect of producing dehydration.<sup>49</sup>

### Autoimmune Diseases

In the processing of coffee, from the bean to the brew, the beans are fermented.<sup>50</sup> This makes coffee another one of those foods which has been touched by spoilage and carries with it the elements of rot (aflatoxins and mycotoxins) that provokes inflammation and disease.<sup>51,52</sup> This is one of the reasons why coffee increases the risk of autoimmune inflammatory diseases such as rheumatoid arthritis<sup>53,54</sup> and psoriasis.<sup>55</sup> It would be much better to obtain fresh products (fruits, vegetables, nuts, seeds, beans and grains) because they are usually anti-inflammatory and more nutrient dense.

## Blood Pressure

The impact of caffeine consumption on blood pressure is dose dependant; the more caffeine you consume, the higher your blood pressure goes.<sup>56,57</sup> What actually happens is that caffeine acutely raises blood pressure by raising circulating concentrations of the stress mediators epinephrine and norepinephrine. In addition, caffeine increases arterial stiffness and inhibits the relaxation of blood vessels both of which increase the risk of high bloods pressure.<sup>58</sup>

## Stroke

The effect of coffee on the body is rapid and sudden and the consequence of its use can be very abrupt. For example, during the first hour after consuming coffee, while your blood pressure is up, your risk of stroke doubles.<sup>59</sup>

## Diabetes

Diabetes is at an all-time high with many people suffering from it and its complications. For the diabetic trying to maintain moderate blood sugars on lifestyle changes, they need to know that caffeine increases diabetic blood sugars by 28%<sup>60,61</sup> and decreases the effectiveness of exercise in lowering blood sugar.<sup>62</sup> So if you are a diabetic or have a high risk of being one, cutting coffee is just one more step on the road to health.

## Cancer!

Of all the diseases experience by man, none seems to create more fear and trepidation than does cancer. Cancer is often the result of unwanted changes in the DNA code of your cells. I am happy to say that your Creator foresaw this and included in your cells machinery which proof reads and corrects DNA errors. Sad to say,

caffeine counteracts this provision by preventing the repair of damaged DNA, making cancer more likely.<sup>63</sup> This may explain why one of the reasons Coffee increases the risk of pancreatic cancer is that coffee drinkers experience and retain far more cancer causing gene (DNA) mutations.<sup>64</sup> There is an 80% higher risk of pancreatic cancer in coffee drinkers.<sup>65</sup>

The risk of other cancers also increases with coffee use. Two or more cups of coffee per day more than doubles the risk of ovarian cancer.<sup>66</sup> When caffeine is combined with a high fat diet, it significantly increases breast cancer risk.<sup>67</sup> For women, the more coffee you drink in a day the higher your risk of ovarian cancer.

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The risk of ovarian cancer increases 31% for one cup of coffee per day and 81% for 5 or more cups per day.<sup>68</sup> This is compared to non-drinkers of coffee whose risk was very low. So, pick which risk you are willing to tolerate and drink the appropriate amount of coffee to achieve that risk.

Four or more cups of coffee per day doubles the risk for non-Hodgkin's lymphoma.<sup>69</sup> Compared to non-drinkers, men who drank one cup of coffee per day had a 150% higher risk of Stomach cancer.<sup>70,71</sup> Compared to those who reported no coffee drinking, men who averaged more than 250-ml per day experienced a 40% increase in risk of prostate cancer.<sup>72</sup>

Coffee increases the risk for small cell carcinoma of the lung by 250%.<sup>73</sup> What comes in must go out, and maybe this explains the increase of bladder cancer for coffee drinkers.<sup>74,75</sup> Bottom line, if you are planning to avoid becoming a cancer statistic, coffee is not the best beverage for helping you achieve that goal.

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### Heartburn and Reflux Disease

I have had many people approach me about their concern for all the reflux pills they are taking and their side effects. Little do they realize that the real cause of their reflux and heartburn symptoms may be coming from coffee. Certain stimulants are known to increase stomach acid and the burn.<sup>76</sup> These include tea, coffee, and caffeine.<sup>77</sup> Coffee has a relaxing effect on the valve at the top of your stomach (lower esophageal sphincter).<sup>78</sup> That valve is there to stop food and acid from returning back up your throat. Coffee is a drink that a large percentage of people with reflux and heartburn report causes them symptoms of pain.<sup>79</sup>

### Heart Attacks!

Coffee can have an impact on the heart that is not desirable. Daily caffeine consumption increases LDL,<sup>80</sup> sometimes referred to as “bad” cholesterol. It also can increase triglycerides,<sup>81</sup> and the risk of heart attack.<sup>82</sup> HDL is sometimes referred to as “good” cholesterol, but sadly coffee decreases HDL.<sup>83</sup> What is its impact on total cholesterol? Two-hundred milligrams of caffeine per day, (about 2 cups of coffee) can increase total cholesterol by 11 mg/dL.<sup>84,85</sup>



Other lab values adversely affected by caffeine include homocysteine.<sup>86</sup> When homocysteine is elevated it increases the likelihood of a heart attack. Maybe this is one of the reasons why coffee consumption is a potential trigger for sudden cardiac death in persons with other risk factors for ischemic heart disease.<sup>87</sup>



## The Dark Side of Coffee

The production of that wonderful brew that people so love has been linked to slavery and child labor in many countries (Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Guinea, Honduras, Kenya, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, Uganda, Vietnam, Côte d’Ivoire).<sup>88</sup> “In that ye have done it unto one of the least of these, ye have done it unto Me.”<sup>89</sup>

What’s more; many of the beans you buy are grown in countries that under-regulate the use of toxic cancer causing chemicals and dangerous, health destroying pesticides.<sup>90,91,92</sup>

# Repellent



So why do so many plants in nature produce caffeine? What is the function of caffeine in nature? Many experts feel that caffeine is a natural pesticide. Caffeine is actually poisonous to herbivores and insects. It is also toxic to plants and is stored in special vacuoles or specialized plant compartments,

which protect the plant from this toxic stimulant.<sup>93</sup> In God's ecology, it is produced by the plant in response to the nibbling stimulus of herbivores to prevent over-grazing. The grazing animals taste the caffeine poison and are smart enough to move on and leave the plants behind, are we?

## Summary

- Coffee is a popular beverage worldwide with an addictive quality.
- Coffee has been pushed by its dealers to be a health beverage, when in reality it is quite the opposite.
- Caffeine is a mind-altering drug that affects the frontal lobes of the brain, where your conscience resides and through which God wants to communicate with people. Coffee negatively impacts people's health in many documented ways.
- When drinking coffee, people are aiding and abetting those who engage in the violation of human rights.
- In nature, caffeine signals animals not to over graze on certain plants.
- If you drink coffee, are you ready to turn your life around and switch to a healthier alternative?

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