



COFFEE MAY BE HEARTIER THAN YOU THINK

Want to consume a beverage daily that not only smells and tastes great, but gives you more energy? A drug that could lower your risk of diabetes, Parkinson's disease, and colon cancer? That could lift your mood and treat headaches? That could lower your risk of cavities? Make you mentally sharper? And most importantly prevent cardiovascular disease? Well, most likely you already have it in your pantry!

A large study of 41,836 postmenopausal women of the relationships between the level of coffee drinking and cardiovascular disease, cancer and some inflammatory diseases has found that coffee may reduce the risk of inflammatory diseases, which includes coronary heart disease.

The study excluded women who already had evidence of a whole variety of existing conditions, leaving 27,312 women, who were studied for an average of 15 years.

For women consuming an average of one to three cups of coffee per day, the risk of dying from coronary heart disease was reduced by almost 25%, for four to five cups 20%, and for six or more cups per day, still almost 10%. This reduction was attributed to the antioxidant content of coffee, which might reduce the inflammatory component of cardiovascular disease. There is steadily increasing evidence that inflammation is a key component of the damage present in arteries in patients with coronary heart disease. This has been shown through elevated levels of cytokines associated with inflammation.

Coffee has also been shown to help increase alertness and mental efficiency because of its stimulant component, caffeine. Six other recent studies indicate that people who drink coffee on a regular basis are up to 80% less likely to develop Parkinson's, with three showing the more they drink, the lower the risk. Other research shows that compared to not drinking coffee, at least two cups daily can translate to a 25% reduced risk of colon cancer, an 80% drop in liver cirrhosis risk, and nearly half the risk of gallstones.

So, if you love your fresh cup of coffee in the morning, be sure to have another throughout the day!



Sources:

Andersen LF, Jacobs DR Jr, Carlsen MH, Blomhoff R. Am J Clin Nutr 2006; 83: 1039-46.

Kirchheimer S, Smirth MW. WebMD Feature Archive