COFFEE

BENEFITS

- **Used properly, coffee is an effective drug. Coffee can actually be a healthy food medicine. There are claims that it helps heart disease, type 2 diabetes, and obesity.**
- **Taken straight, black and hot, it can help decongest an gallbladder attack.**
- **It is a vasoconstrictor – narrows arteries and veins, therefore if you have a vasodilating (exploding type) headache, it can bring relief.**
- **It has been shown to help lengthen our telomeres (telomeres are repetitive DNA sequences located at the ends of chromosomes that protect them from damage and prevent them from fraying or sticking together. They shorten each time a cell divides, which is associated with aging and cell death when they become too short).**
- **Many natural health clinics recommend doing coffee enemas to cleanse out the body of toxins.**
- **If you are sleepy or tired, drinking coffee can get you through a rough patch when writing exams or driving. It is an energizer, many people use the caffeine in coffee to keep them awake when getting tired as they are driving a car. Some use it to keep their brain awake when studying, however it is an irritant to the brain.**
- **Caffeine blocks adenosine receptors in the brain, leading to increased activity of neurotransmitters like dopamine and norepinephrine, which can cause blood vessels to constrict. However, caffeine also has a direct effect on the blood vessels themselves. At low to moderate doses, caffeine can induce vasodilation by increasing the production of nitric oxide in the endothelium. This effect is beneficial for improving blood flow and lowering blood pressure in healthy individuals. Caffeine can also be a vasosuppressor, so it is tricky.**
- **Moderate coffee consumption, typically defined as 3-4 cups per day, may have neutral or even positive effects on cardiovascular health, including improved blood flow and endothelial function (however, high levels of coffee consumption can lead to vasoconstriction, potentially increasing blood pressure and cardiovascular risk). Many people are more sensitive to caffeine and may experience vasoconstriction and increased heart rate at much lower doses than less sensitive individuals.**
- **Because it is also can be vaso-constricting, if you have a headache that is vaso-dilating (feels like it is exploding, feels better with cold cloths or cold air), then this can be of help.**
- **Drinking a hot cup of strong black coffee can ease a gallbladder attack.**
- **Because it is an irritant, many people find it helps to move their bowels after they have a morning coffee.**
- **People find it energizing and use it in the morning to start their day.**
- **Coffee is a good source of antioxidants. One cup has 200 – 550 mg of antioxidants including chlorogenic acid which helps the body process fat and sugar. Hot brewed coffee has more antioxidants than cold brewed; cold brewed is lower in acid (better if you have acid reflux or other acid problems) but higher in caffeine.**
- **If you are going to drink coffee, choose the best and most healthiest coffee you can afford. It is best to drink it black, but you can flavour it by sprinkling cinnamon, ginger, turmeric or cardamon on top of the coffee grounds before brewing if you wish. You can also add a drop or two of pure vanilla or almond extract for flavour. If you want it sweet, try adding stevia or monk sugar. Some people like adding oat milk or cows milk to help prevent the teeth from staining.**
- **Black coffee has no calories or carbs, no fat, and is low in sodium. It also has micronutrients of**

potassium, magnesium, and niacin.

- **You can add mushrooms to your coffee. For instance, add a little powdered lion's mane, chaga, reishi mushroom etc to help boost the immune system.**
- **Caffeine is a natural nootropic which can increase memory, creativity, motivation, attention. If you are sensitive to stimulants, avoid coffee.**
- **Studies have examined whether caffeine could be useful in the treatment of asthma, given its dilating effects on airways, and several have found modest benefits. Some recommend coffee intake be avoided before breathing tests because it might mask the abnormalities the breathing tests are looking for.**
- **Newborns, especially those who are premature or have undergone surgery just after birth, may be treated with caffeine to stimulate their breathing (Harvard publishing).**
- **Several studies suggest that coffee reduces the risk of Parkinson's disease. Some research suggests that as little as one cup a day can reduce the risk by 30%. Among people who already have Parkinson's disease, coffee may reduce symptoms and worsening of disease over time.**
- **There is evidence that coffee consumption might reduce the risk of diabetes, Alzheimer's disease, kidney stones, gallstones, and depression.**
- **For good health, it has been used in enema preparations to cleanse the bowel an help drain the liver.**
- **It is used as a wakeup medicine in emergencies.**
- **It is an irritant. Many use it to stimulate the bowel to help constipation. It is also an irritant to the nerves so if you are having nerve problems, this is not for you. As an irritant, if you have ulcerated tissue in the digestive system, this can make it worse.**
- **If your health is pretty good, coffee drank in moderation (1-2 cups a day, 3 tops) should not be a problem. A cup of brewed or percolated coffee has 118-135 mg caffeine, so you could have up to three cups a day if you have no other caffeine sources. Other sources might be energy drinks, instant coffee, espresso, cola, black tea, green tea, hot cocoa, decaf coffee, certain herbal or decaf teas.**

DOWNSIDE:

- **It stimulates cortisol production, which can add problems to an already compromised stressed digestive tract.**
- **Drinking coffee when you first wake up? Cortisol is often called the 'stress hormone' which is misleading because you think cortisol is a negative, but cortisol mobilizes energy, regulates inflammation and prepares the immune system, it makes you alert and functioning, During the 30-45 min. after you wake up your cortisol level spikes between 38-75% (research of Stefan Wust and Clemens Kirschbaum). This is called 'the cortisol awakening response' and it is an automatic response. Cortisol doesn't just activate your brain, it activates your entire digestive system, stimulates gastric acid secretion, and triggers your enteric nervous system. However, cortisol, when it stays elevated too long, suppresses the mucous layer that lines your stomach wall. Your stomach produces hydrochloric acid with a pH somewhere between 1.5 and 3.5 (lemon juice is around pH 2; battery acid is pH 0) so your fasting stomach acid first thing in the morning is sitting at an acidity that is very acid, and it suppose to be there, ready to kill pathogens, activating enzymes that break down proteins, ionizing minerals so the small intestine can absorb them, it is essential. The only thing standing between the acid and your cellular wall of your stomach is the mucous layer in the stomach which is a protective coating, a buffer – and unfortunately cortisol suppresses it.**
  In the morning, your cortisol is naturally at its peak of the day and your protective stomach lining is under the most metabolic stress it experiences in any 24 hr period. Caffeine stimulates the release of cortisol and when you drink coffee in that first 30-45 minutes after waking (when your cortisol is already spiking), you are increasing the cortisol already present which means your stomach lining intensifies and you have added an acidic beverage (coffee has a pH of 4-5) directly

into a stomach is already at maximum acid concentration with a compromised protective coating and no food to buffer it. The ideal time to ingest coffee is 90-120 minutes after waking.
When you drink warm water first thing in the morning on an empty stomach it dilutes the acid, stimulates the stomach wall to replenishes mucus, it also activates peristalsis (helps with bowel movements) and rehydrates your entire digestive system. Studies show warm water works better than cold water because warm fluid relaxes the smooth digestive muscles better than cold fluid (cold water can reduce blood flow to digestive tissue). Drink 1-2 glasses of warm water first thing in the morning before you do anything else.

- **If your health has deteriorated, you need to skip coffee until you are feeling better. The acids and oils can disrupt your pH – making your body toooo acidic and if you are already acidic, it just makes it worse. This is especially true if you have cancer which thrives in an acid pH. Also, it can be a vaso-suppressor, in other words it makes the blood vessels and arteries contract – so if you have a vaso- dilating headache, it can help, but if your headache is already constricting, it can make it worse. You will have to test this out for yourself to see what is best.**
- **Because coffee can be vaso constricting (narrowing blood vessels), it can drive blood pressure up – useful if you have low blood pressure. Individuals with pre-existing hypertension may be more prone to the vasoconstrictive effects of caffeine, potentially worsening their condition. If you are not sure. Go a day or two without coffee and take your blood pressure, then drink coffee as you normally would and take your blood pressure throughout the day to see what effect it has on your blood vessels, arteries and veins.**
- **It is an irritant to the nerves so avoid if you have nerve issues. Consuming too much caffeine can lead to increased anxiety and nervousness by blocking adenosine and triggering adrenaline release.**
  As an irritant, it can irritate the stomach so if you have digestive problems such as over acidity, ulcers, acid reflux etc. you should avoid coffee.
- **Excess caffeine has been linked to increased heart rate, chest pain and weakened bones. The bones perhaps are weakened because of the high acidic pH caused by the coffee, needs to be buffered, and the body will steal the calcium (alkaline pH) from the bones.**
- **Stopping intake of coffee quickly can lead to nasty headaches for a few days, perhaps because of an increased blood flow to the brain. Sudden withdrawal may lead to headaches, anxiety, irritability, or trouble sleeping, especially in sensitive individuals. Many over the counter drugs for headaches and pain remedies include caffeine as one of their ingredients, mostly because the person hasn't had their 'hit' of caffeine in a while.**
- **If you have a poor immune system, pass on the coffee. Caffeine acts as such a jolt to the immune system that it can virtually shut it down.**
- **Many people claim it is addictive. When working with clients, avoiding coffee in the diet seems to be the greatest challenge and stress for them. Some people find it harder to give up coffee than to give up smoking.**
- **Caffeine is also found in many soft drinks. If you have to wean yourself from coffee try a natural decaffeinated type in the weaning process.**
- **Heartburn can be an issue. Even decaffeinated coffee can stimulate the secretion of stomach acid leading to heartburn.**
- **Caffeine is not dehydrating, but it is a mild diuretic. It encourages the kidneys to produce more urine and some will experience an annoying increase in urination.**
- **Most people avoid drinking coffee in the evening, finding it can disrupt their sleep pattern. Avoid drinking coffee 8 hours before bedtime.**
- **Decaffeinated coffee still has the acids and oils which make the pH acidic, just not the caffeine which affects the nerves.**