

Nutrition Facts

Caffeine *Is There a Safe Amount?*

What is Caffeine?

Caffeine is a natural ingredient found in many common foods such as coffee, tea and chocolate. It is also added to some products like pop and medications. Caffeine acts as a stimulant and can help keep you awake. People who are more sensitive to the effects of caffeine may have unpleasant side effects including headaches, irritability and increased heart rate.



Is it Safe?

It depends on your age and whether you are pregnant or breastfeeding. For the average adult, 400 mg of caffeine per day is safe.

Caffeine and Children

Children should not have as much caffeine as adults since their nervous system is still developing. Children are more sensitive to the effects of caffeine. Here are the amounts of caffeine that are safe for kids of different ages:

Age	Maximum Caffeine per Day	Food examples
4-6 years	45 mg	1 can of cola
7-9 years	62.5 mg	1 ½ cans of cola
10-12 years	85 mg	2 cans of cola

Children should not drink energy drinks as they often contain high amounts of caffeine. For more information on energy drinks check out:

<http://www.unlockfood.ca/en/Articles/Caffeine/Facts-on-Energy-Drinks.aspx>

Caffeine and Adults

According to Health Canada, a moderate daily caffeine intake (400 mg) is safe and not associated with health problems like cancer, osteoporosis and heart disease.

Guarana is a flavour added to energy drinks and some soft drinks. It contains a caffeine-like substance that has the same stimulant effect as caffeine.

Caffeine and Pregnant and Breastfeeding Women



If you are pregnant, planning to become pregnant, or breastfeeding, it is a good time to avoid or limit your intake of caffeine. Large amounts of caffeine may increase the chances of miscarriage, premature delivery, and low birth weight.

Pregnant women and breastfeeding mothers should have **no more than 300 mg of caffeine per day from all sources**. This is approximately two (8 oz. / 250 ml) cups of coffee per day. When estimating your caffeine intake, remember to consider the size of the cup you are using.

Caffeine is passed into breast milk. Large amounts of caffeine while breastfeeding can make baby fussy and have trouble sleeping.

Tips to Reduce your Caffeine Intake

- ✓ Many caffeinated drinks offer little or no nutrition, so choose more nutritious options more often; such as water and low-fat milk.
- ✓ Try non-caffeinated options, like herbal teas (talk to a Registered Dietitian about herbal teas if you are pregnant or breastfeeding)
- ✓ Choose decaf coffee or mix half and half regular and decaf

How Much Caffeine is in there?

Food or Beverage	Amount of Caffeine
Coffee, brewed (1 cup / 250 ml)	80 – 179 mg
Coffee, instant (1 cup / 250 ml)	81 – 106 mg
Coffee, decaf (1 cup / 250 ml)	3 – 5 mg
Iced coffee (1 cup / 250 ml)	119 mg
Black Tea (1 cup / 250 ml)	43 – 50 mg
Green Tea (1 cup / 250 ml)	25 – 45 mg
Iced Tea (1 can / 355 ml)	22 – 64 mg
Cola (1 can / 355 ml)	37 – 38 mg
Root Beer (1 can / 555 ml)	23 mg
Dark Chocolate (1 oz / 28 g)	19 mg
Milk Chocolate (1 oz / 28 g)	7 mg
Energy Drinks (1 can)	80 – 259 mg
Chocolate Milk (1 cup / 250 ml)	5 – 8 mg
Herbal Tea (1 cup / 250 ml)	0 mg

References

Health Canada. (2013) Caffeine and Kids. <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/tips-healthy-eating-tips-families/caffeine-kids.html#a2>

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