

TEA AND HEALTH

The Science Behind the Role of Tea in Health and Wellness

LIPTON INSTITUTE OF TEA

Tea is the most widely consumed beverage in the world after water. Throughout history, there have been many folklores about the role of tea in health and wellness. Today, new research is showing that there may be truth behind many of these folklores.¹

What is tea?

Tea (green, oolong, white, or black) is produced from the evergreen shrub called *Camellia sinensis*. During the process of making tea, the plant's leaves are dried quickly after picking – before they wilt and oxidize. The leaves are heated at different stages of oxidation depending on the type of tea – green, oolong, white or black. Unlike other teas, herbal teas are not derived from the tea plant but rather, are made from a blend of herbs, flowers, fruits, and/or spices.

Tea and flavonoids

Black, green, white and oolong teas contain naturally protective flavonoids. Drinking tea helps reinforce the natural defenses of our body. The types and amounts of flavonoids found in tea differ depending on the variety of leaf, the growing environment, processing, manufacturing, particle size of ground tea

leaves and infusion preparation.² An average cup of black or green tea provides 140 to 300 mg of flavonoids.^{2,3}

Tea and hydration

Nutrition experts agree that calorie-free tea is an excellent hydration fluid.^{1,4} Healthy adults should consume between 74 to 85 fluid ounces of fluids every day.⁵ Hydration is fundamental to a number of physical and mental performances – for example concentration, alertness, speed and sports performance.^{1,4}

It is a common myth that tea acts as a diuretic and may be dehydrating because of its caffeine content. Caffeine containing beverages like tea, however do not lead to dehydration. People who drink caffeinated beverages typically develop a tolerance to caffeine so any small initial diuretic effect is diminished over time.^{1,6} Research also shows that the levels of caffeine in regularly consumed amounts of tea do not lead to dehydration and the fluid in tea contributes to hydration.^{1,4,6}

Tea and heart health

Epidemiological studies suggest that regular green or black tea consumption as part of a healthy lifestyle may help maintain heart health.^{7,8}



Tea and weight management

Tea, when served without milk or sugar, contains virtually no calories. This makes tea an ideal choice for people managing a healthy weight, especially when substituting for sweetened beverages.

Tea and attention

Alpha brain wave activity during cognitive tasks is associated with attention processes.^{9,10} Recent studies have shown that consumption of theanine, a unique amino acid naturally present in tea, may modulate alpha brain wave activity.^{11,12,13} One cup of tea contains (on average) 5-23 mg of theanine and 40-60 mg of caffeine.¹⁴ Drinking black tea, 2-3 cups* within 1-2 hours, may help to focus attention.¹⁵

* Based on consumption of 2-3 cups of tea delivering 45 mg of theanine and 100 mg of caffeine.

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