

liver cancer and colorectal cancer (7). Can coffee be considered happiness in a cup? Likely so; as shown by a Harvard study published in 2011, women who drank 4 or more cups per day had a 20% lower risk of becoming depressed (7).

### How Much Jolt is in That Brain Juice?

According to Linda Nickel, Starbucks Certified Coffee Manager in Yankton, SD, every cup of coffee contains caffeine. A twelve ounce cup of coffee contains around 240 milligrams (mg.) of caffeine, and you'll find 15 mg. of caffeine in that same sized cup of decaffeinated coffee. There's 75 mg. in a single shot of espresso, used to make the Tall (small) hot beverages at Starbucks. Looking for a little more brain juice? Grande (medium) and Venti (large) Starbucks hot beverages will each give you a double shot of espresso, or 150 mg. of caffeine to get your day going.

As for teas, Linda explains that herbal teas do not contain caffeine as they are not actually made from the tea leaf. They are a combination of leaves, flowers, roots, berries, fruit peels and tree barks. Two of Starbucks most popular teas in the herbal line are Refresh Tea containing peppermint and spearmint leaves and Calm Tea containing chamomile flower. Other herbal teas available at Starbucks are Passion Tea and Vanilla Rooibos Tea. Their green tea, Zen Tea, has spearmint notes and has about as much caffeine as their black teas. The China Green Tips Tea tastes a bit grassy and their black teas available are Awake Tea, Chai Tea and Earl Grey Tea.

Besides increasing your energy and mental alertness, caffeine itself has other benefits as well. Studies have shown that caffeine helps improve memory function, increases the body's metabolic rate by 3-11%, increases the body's fat burning capabilities and increases physical performance by 11-12% (7).

Though there are several benefits from coffee and caffeine, I still don't condone drinking too much of it. Drinking excessive amounts of caffeine may not be good for your health, or for your social life. Take it from me: if you notice your increase in caffeine consumption coincides with the moodiness of those around you,

you might want to back off a little. As for me, I can always find a reason for a good cup of coffee. I look forward to tomorrow. It'll be another great day to fill up my cup. Not half empty or even half full, fill it all the way up!

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