

should caffeine provide pain relief? During a headache, blood vessels dilate, meaning they are open wider. Caffeine causes the vessels to constrict, or become more narrow.

Cirrhosis of the Liver

Researchers say that coffee may counteract alcohol's poisonous effects on the liver and help prevent cirrhosis. In a study of more than 125,000 people, one cup of coffee per day cut the risk of alcoholic cirrhosis by 20 percent. Four cups per day reduced the risk by 80 percent. The coffee effect held true for women and men of various ethnic backgrounds.

SOURCES:

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Terry Graham, PhD, University of Guelph, Canada.

Frank Hu, MD, PhD, associate professor of nutrition and epidemiology, Harvard School of Public Health, Boston.

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Coffee is the #1 source of antioxidants in your diet! Antioxidants are the substances which are also present in tea, fruits and vegetables that enhance overall health.

New research shows that drinking coffee can cut the risk of serious diseases.

Parkinson's disease

A recent study published in the Journal of the American Medical Association has found that caffeine may prevent the development of Parkinson's disease. Parkinson's disease is a neurological disorder which is characterized by muscle tremor, slow movement, and weakness; a result of dopamine deficiency. (Dopamine acts as the messenger between nerve cells). Coffee can reduce the symptoms of the disease by allowing the release of dopamine into the brain.

Type 2 Diabetes

Researchers say that caffeine as well as other elements in coffee may work separately as well as together in lowering the risk of type 2 diabetes by preventing insulin resistance. Coffee (both regular and decaffeinated) has lots of antioxidants like chlorogenic acid (one of the

compounds responsible for the coffee flavor) and magnesium. These ingredients can actually improve sensitivity to insulin and may contribute to lowering risk of type 2 diabetes.

Colon (Colorectal) Cancer

According to a group of researchers in Germany, drinking coffee may help prevent colon cancer. They identified a potent antioxidant compound in the coffee that appears to boost the activity of phase II enzymes, which are thought to protect against colon cancer, the second leading cause of cancer death in the United States. The anticancer compound, called methylpyridinium, is found almost exclusively in coffee and coffee products but is not found in significant amounts in other foods and beverages.

Gallstones

According to a ten-year study published in early June in the Journal of the American Medical Association, coffee drinking can reduce the risk of gallstones by 40 percent or more. If you're drinking at least two cups of coffee a day, you may be less likely to experience gallbladder problems. The Harvard researchers noted that coffee has several metabolic effects that could reduce the risk of gallstones. Caffeine, for example, is known to increase the flow of bile. A liquid that is produced by the liver and then concentrated and stored in the gallbladder, bile is necessary to break down fats in the small intestine during digestion. Gallstones may occur when bile becomes overloaded with cholesterol and the fatty substance begins to accrete around a tiny particle.

Asthma

Regular coffee drinkers have about 1/3 less asthma symptoms than those of non-coffee drinkers according to a Harvard researcher who studied 20,000 people. In particular, drinking caffeinated coffee in the situation of an emergency onset of asthma in which there is no inhaler available, will allow the patient to breathe easily by opening airways.

Alzheimer's Disease

According to research published in the Journal of Neuroscience, caffeine intake not only appears to protect against Alzheimer's but may actually help those who already have the disease.

In Alzheimer's disease a protein fragment called beta amyloid, that would be broken down in a normal brain, begins to accumulate into tiny clusters known as plaques. These plaques exist between nerve cells in the brain and have the effect of destroying nerve tissue. It has been known for some time that the higher the levels of beta amyloid in the brain the greater the level of brain impairment. It was discovered that caffeine reduced the levels of beta-amyloid already present in the brain.

Headaches

An apple a day may keep the doctor away, but a cup of coffee may chase away a headache. Researchers at Chicago's Diamond Headache clinic found that 200 mg of caffeine, about the amount in a large cup of coffee, provided the same degree of pain relief as 400 mg of ibuprofen pain reliever. Additionally, the caffeine provided faster relief — about half an hour faster! Why