



The Health Benefits of Tea

For thousands of years cultures of the east have consumed tea for its health benefits. Modern science seems to be showing that this is indeed a healthy practice as research indicates tea may help with cancer, heart disease and diabetes, encourage weight loss, lower cholesterol, bring about mental alertness and contains antimicrobial qualities.

American Dietetic Association spokeswoman Katherine Tallmadge, MD, RD, LD explains "There doesn't seem to be a downside to tea...I think it's a great alternative to coffee drinking. First, tea has less caffeine. It's pretty well established that the compounds in tea - their flavonoids - are good for the heart and may reduce cancer." (Edgar, 2009).

Whether it is green, white, black, oolong or pu-erh tea it all comes from the Camellia sinensis shrub which grows in India and China. This plant is rich in unique antioxidants called flavonoids which may be useful in fighting cancer, heart disease and clogged arteries. "Tea has about 8 to 10 times the polyphenols (antioxidants) found in fruits and vegetables." (Davis, 2007) The difference in the various teas comes from the way the plant is processed to make the tea.

Green Tea



This type of tea is made with minimal processing (the tea leaves are withered and steamed not fermented).

Has the highest concentration of EGCG, a potent antioxidant.

White Tea



The least processed.

Contains highest amount of antioxidants.

Contains the least caffeine.

Black Tea



The most processed (most oxidized), it is made with fermented leaves.

Highest caffeine content (but less than a typical cup of coffee).

The most popular tea in Western countries.

Source

Davis, Jeanie (2007). The Health Benefits of Tea. WebMD.com Retrieved from: <http://www.webmd.com/food-recipes/features/health-benefits-tea>

Edgar, Julie (2009). Types of Teas and Their Health Benefits. WebMD.com Retrieved From: <http://www.webmd.com/diet/features/tea-types-and-their-health-benefits>

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