

Four coffees a day ‘cuts risk of early death’

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It is possible that the anti-inflammatory polyphenols in coffee could play a role in its protective effect

ANTHONY DEVLIN/PA

Four cups of coffee a day could cut the risk of early death by two thirds.

Each extra two cups of coffee appeared to reduce the risk by a quarter, according to Spanish researchers, who said that the protective effect might be even greater in those aged over 45.

Although the results do not prove that the drink benefits health directly, they come a month after two large studies found that coffee drinkers were less likely to die of several fatal conditions, suggesting that on average they would live a couple of months longer than people who did not drink coffee.

Scientists said that while they were not recommending a daily brew, it

was fairly clear that healthy people did not need to worry about caffeine intake.

In the latest study, researchers looked at data on 20,000 Spanish graduates with an average age of 38 at the start of a ten-year study, during which 337 of them died.

People who drank at least four cups of coffee a day were 65 per cent less likely to die during the study than those who never drank it, adjusting for lifestyle and class. The risk of dying early was 25 per cent lower for each extra two cups drunk, according to the results presented at the European Society of Cardiology congress in Barcelona.

Coffee drinkers tend to be healthier in other ways which may not have been entirely adjusted for. However, Adela Navarro, of the Hospital de Navarra in Pamplona, who led the study, suggested that the anti-inflammatory polyphenols in coffee could play a role.

Comments

Martin

I had problems with double and triple heart beats. My consultant warned me that the 3rd cup of coffee of the day went straight to the muscles of the heart causing the irregular heartbeat. Tony Blair when he was PM had an episode caused by too much coffee drinking if I remember rightly. When I reduced my coffee intake to one (and the occasional 2) cups a day, heart beat problem resolved. Problem is the caffeine and I now mainly drink Red Bush, caffeine free, tea.

Nick Billson

As usual when talking about "coffee" in these articles, there is no mention of either the amount or type of coffee.

Brexit24

Since the analysis was done in Spain, we can conclude they are talking about spanish coffee (i.e. *café solo*, *café con leche*) not that awful granulated tosh we consume here.

Unsurprising that the Spanish drink so much coffee - the working day is much longer than here in the UK or some of the Northern European countries.

M Sheridan
@Brexit24

Actually the Spanish tend to drink somewhat adulterated coffee. In which upto 50% of the beans are roasted with sugar - Torrefacto. I expect this is based upon Spanish research as well:-

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Torrefacto>

Hours worked are not much different. Plus the calendar is littered with Fiestas starting with National, regional and local. The most amazing one I find is that there are fiestas during Lent! If I remember the first week.

Ken Harvey
The Times is beginning to resemble the Daily Mail more and more, particularly in their reporting of health and medical studies.

No critical analysis and misleading headlines seems to be the order of the day.

Stanley Cohen
In addition to all of the critical comments below, Mr Smyth, HOW BIG IS A BLOODY CUP?

Michael Fisher
The headline is quite wrong, I suggest. There is no evidence whatsoever that if you haven't been drinking coffee but start now you will reduce the risk of an early death.

The article then mentions 'protective benefits' of coffee, but no protective benefits have been shown to exist.

This is not science, it is statistical number-crunching, and common sense suggests to me that the truth is more likely 'the other way round' - i.e. it is not that drinking more coffee makes you healthier, but that healthier people tend to drink more coffee.

I think there is good cause for a publication with pretensions to being the 'quality press' to mention who funded this research. It might be interesting to know.

BSP

Drinking Cappuccino in the morning causes you to become Italian.
Fact.

M Sheridan

@Michael Fisher

Perhaps this about antioxidants is true?

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Torrefacto>

Helios

Poor reporting again. I would like to see a simple explanation of the biochemistry explaining why drinking coffee is advantageous. Do you need to drink 'proper' coffee or will Nescafe or similar suffice? How big are the cups?

LapsedScientist

@Helios Consuming more dietary polyphenols might be protective. They might reduce circulating free radicals. That might reduce oxidative damage. That might reduce risk of disease.

On the other hand, they probably aren't, and probably don't.

I would take all of this stuff with a huge pinch of salt. Just don't eat the salt. It might give you cardiovascular disease (but it might not).

James Anderson

How large is a cup of coffee? The same size as a cup of tea? Or the thimble that one gets served in a restaurant?

it'sme

2 months longer (8 weeks) on average, so 6 to 10 weeks.....

Spend that short time in making the coffee.....

Hippos can't swim

Not instant coffee. Has to be coffee grounds.