Is Coffee Bad For Your Health?

The facts about the risks and benefits of drinking coffee.

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For most people, coffee may do more good than harm. Studies show that coffee may protect the liver, decrease risk of Parkinson's and reduce chances of developing type 2 diabetes. A large study found people who regularly drank 2 to 4 cups had a lower risk of stroke. Coffee may improve cognitive ability and alleviate depression.

How did coffee get its bad reputation? When early studies investigated coffee drinkers, they didn't control for other factors, such as smoking, drinking, and inactivity. When coffee consumption was evaluated more scientifically, there was no added risk for heart disease or cancer. Additionally, researchers did not find a link between caffeinated coffee and irregular heartbeats, stroke, heart attack, high cholesterol, or stomach problems.

Coffee drinking isn't for everyone. Caffeine can interfere with sleep and may be harmful to children. Some people may become dependent on caffeine, and are irritable when they don't get their cup of joe. Although coffee has many potential benefits, more isn't better. Limit yourself to no more than four cups a day. Also, drink it black, as cream and sugar add unhealthy fat and carbs to your diet.

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