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Seniors and Coffee: How Much Cups Should You Drink Per Day?

Emma Houston · Tuesday, April 6th, 2021

There's no big wonder in the fact that most senior citizens are coffee lovers. What you may be surprised with, however, is just how much that is the case. Studies show that the elderly consume more coffee compared to all other age groups — a staggering 75% of older Americans drink at least one cup each day!

But how healthy is this? After all, regardless of your age, we know that consuming coffee beyond moderation can't be the best thing for your health. Plus, when you're an elderly person, maintaining your health becomes an even more important task. Considering this, we'll take a look at how coffee affects our seniors — and how much coffee is actually good for you in your golden years!

The Pros of Drinking Coffee

As you might assume, there are plenty of things that are great about coffee — especially if you're a senior. No matter how old you are, there's no feeling quite like that jolt of energy that your body receives from an early morning cup of joe. This is just the stimulus you need to improve your basic cognitive functions; all of us think more clearly and perform intellectual and motoric tasks better when we're wide awake.

However, beyond giving you a much-needed energy boost as an elderly person; what you may not know is that coffee actually has some chronic upsides as well. There are plenty of diseases and conditions which can be improved by drinking coffee. For example, you can reduce the risk of developing liver disease, some types of diabetes, Parkinson's, and even depression.

This is especially dramatic when we talk about [diabetes](#). There are some studies whose research indicates that coffee — but without cream, sugar, or other sweeteners — has an astounding effect on reducing the chances of developing type 2 diabetes. In fact, there are indications that you can reduce these chances by an entire 25% by just drinking three unsweetened cups of coffee each day! This is true for both women and men, and decaf coffee counts as well.

Another great effect that you'll receive from a moderate coffee intake is a reduced risk of potential heart failure. It is found that if you drink coffee in even the most modest amounts — like a single cup each day — can reduce the risks of cardiovascular disorders by almost 20 percent!

The Downsides of Coffee

Of course, all of this stuff that we've talked about above is true only if you consume coffee in moderation. On the other hand, excess coffee consumption can have far-reaching negative consequences — particularly for the elderly. If you're a senior, you definitely don't want to go over four cups of joe on a daily basis. This can cause you to suffer from a wide range of issues — from headaches, insomnia, and anxiety, all the way to heart palpitations. And all of that happens because an abundance of coffee just overstimulates your entire central nervous system; making you jittery and sleepless.

There are specific reasons why the elderly are particularly susceptible to this as well. Studies [indicate](#) that the metabolism of older people does not clear caffeine as quickly as it does for younger people. In other words, if you're over 65, you will need 30% more time to completely process caffeine and let it leave your body — as a result, it will keep your nervous system alert for much longer.

On top of that, there are other reasons why you may want to reconsider your coffee intake as a senior. Namely, because too much coffee can result in heightened blood pressure, as well as dehydration. And this is crucial to keep in mind, seeing as dehydration is one of the biggest reasons why people older than 65 get hospitalized. If you make the mistake of drinking coffee when you should be drinking water, you could end up developing severe acute dehydration.

Large coffee intake is also capable of irritating the linings of your stomach; an extremely unwanted development if you've got gastritis or ulcers. Coffee will increase the production of stomach acid. It can lower the effectiveness of certain types of medication as well — such as stereopsis medication, thyroid drugs, and antidepressants.

Caffeine-laced food

While most people focus on their coffee intake when they think about how much caffeine they should have during the day; in reality, there are actually plenty of different types of food that contain caffeine as well, and add quite a sizable number to that intake. These are:

- Protein bars
- Sugary sodas
- Chocolate
- Pudding
- Tea
- And many others!

A cup of cola in combination with a chocolate bar can actually add quite a lot of caffeine to the intake that you already have from coffee. Considering that, make sure you take these food types into account while considering how much coffee you can drink during each day. Luckily, all foods have a label describing their contents — including caffeine.

How much caffeine do you need?

So, when we consider everything that we've talked about above — as an elderly person, how much actual coffee can you drink? Of course, coming up with a number that includes other sources of caffeine is pretty much impossible, because that's a highly individual thing that everyone needs to consider for themselves. However, if we don't include these other sources — four cups of coffee are the average daily maximum.

If you're looking to cut back on the negative effects of caffeine, you can either reduce that amount — or try drinking decaf late in the day. That way, you'll still get the satisfying taste of coffee, and even some placebo when it comes to alertness; but you won't increase your caffeine intake.

There are ways to replace coffee as your go-to refreshing drink as a senior — if you feel like you're drinking too much of it. Try to have some sparkling water with lemon slices instead — or milkshakes and smoothies with various coffee-infused flavors that will bring you the taste you want without the immense amounts of caffeine. Remember — it's important to use [coffee makers for the elderly](#) in a responsible manner!

At the end of the day, it's important to remember that you don't need to cut coffee altogether as a senior. It's perfectly acceptable to have one or two cups of coffee during the morning and the day — just don't keep drinking it throughout the entire day, and you should be perfectly fine!

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