

HEALTH BENEFITS OF TEA (*CAMELLIA SINENSIS*)

- Helps prevent cancer and heart disease
- Combats anxiety and negative stress
- Fortifies the immune system
- Simplifies weight management
- Increases oral health
- Rejuvenates skin cells
- Improves Hydration

Health benefits of tea

Antioxidant Properties of Tea: Tea contains an abundant source of natural plant-derived antioxidant compounds called polyphenols. Included within the broad antioxidant polyphenol class are flavonoids and catechins. At 15% of the weight by dry leaf, tea has one of the highest total flavonoid contents of all plants. For many years, tea flavonoids have been thought to provide protective antioxidant action against harmful free radicals that can damage DNA, cell membranes and other cell components.

Tea helps in preventing cancer and heart disease

It's believed that free radicals can cause heart disease, some kinds of cancer and increase the risk of strokes. Recent research has shown the following:

- Drinking tea with its high antioxidant levels may help protect the body from cancer by combating dangerous free radical activity and inhibiting uncontrolled cell growth.
- Anti-oxidants may have curative properties that inhibit the development of heart disease and reduce the risk of stroke and heart attack.
- Tea flavonoids may increase coronary flow and promote healthy blood vessel functionality.
- Consuming tea lowers cholesterol levels.

Combats anxiety and negative stress

L-theanine, a unique amino acid, accounts for over 50% of the free amino acids in tea leaves and less than 2% of the total weight of dry leaf in both black and green teas. Studies show that L-theanine may promote relaxation and calm by influencing particular chemicals in the brain. Japanese researchers discovered that L-theanine is derivative of glutamic acid, a neurotransmitter located in the brain. Easily absorbed by the brain, it influences chemicals such as dopamine and serotonin, which affect mood. Studies show that the amino acid, without causing drowsiness, enhances overall concentration and focus. The effect of L-theanine in combination with caffeine may contribute to the feeling of increased energy and overall calm that many tea drinkers experience.

Fortifies the immune system

Research performed at Harvard University and the Brigham and Women's Hospital indicates that drinking tea helps strengthen the immune system. Tea contains an amino acid substance, L-theanine, as discussed above that also aids the immune system in combating and naturally resisting infection, bacteria and viruses.

Simplifies weight management

Some preliminary research shows that drinking Green tea may help decrease body weight and speed up insulin activity.

Increases oral health

Tea may have oral health benefits. Tea flavonoids may help reduce plaque, which lowers the chance of cavity and gum disease, and the fluoride (extracted from the soil) in tea may aid in protecting against tooth decay by supporting healthy tooth enamel.



Rejuvenates skin cells

Tea is now the preferred beverage of supermodels. The anti-aging properties found in tea help to promote a youthful complexion, while simultaneously reducing the signs of aging. Research indicates that tea flavonoids may strengthen bones and prevent osteoporosis.

Hydration

Drinking tea positively contributes towards your daily fluid intake. It is a misnomer that tea should be avoided altogether as a fluid replacement due to caffeine's diuretic properties. Studies show that tea fails to have a diuretic effect due to caffeine unless the amount of tea drunk during one sitting contains more than 250-300mg of caffeine, equivalent to between 5 and 6 cups of tea.

The nutritional value of tea

In addition to valuable antioxidant properties and enhancing overall fluid intake, tea contains many vitamins, minerals and amino acids that include the following:

- Vitamins: C, K, B12, B6 and E.
- Minerals: Trace amounts of potassium, manganese, magnesium, calcium; Tea provides 70% of our daily fluoride intake.
- Amino Acids: Tea provides a strong source of amino acids including L-theanine. See above for further details.

Comparing black, green and red tea

Black, green, red and white tea all originate from the same plant, the *Camellia sinensis*. However, the final product differs in style, taste and caffeine content due to differences in processing.

While black and green teas contain similar amounts of flavonoids, their chemical makeup differs. Green tea have more catechins, a type of simple flavonoids, and black tea, due to the oxidation process, have more complex flavonoids called theaflavins and thearubigins. Red tea contains a flavonoid profile between that of black and green tea. Despite the effect of the oxidation process on the kinds of flavonoids in black, green and red teas, overall antioxidant activity and levels remain similar.

