

What's in your teacup? Go green!



It has been known for many years that green tea has numerous health benefits. From fighting cancer to lowering cholesterol, more and more health benefits of black tea's lighter cousin are being discovered.



This "miracle drink" shouldn't be brewed in the same way as black tea. Green tea and black tea (along with oolong tea and white tea) all stem from several varieties of the *camellia sinensis* plant. Unlike black tea, which is oxidized for a long time, green tea receives less processing, which leaves the result less hardy. Green tea can burn, and if it is treated harshly or is steeped too long, the result will taste bitter.



If you're not certain about the ideal temperature for steeping, simply pour boiling water into your cup, wait two minutes, then steep your tea for three minutes. Voila! Now enjoy your perfect cup of green tea.



Research has determined that the bulk teas are probably the better choice for optimum healthful drinks, although we tend to buy bags for convenience sake. The Co-op's selection of green tea in bags is quite extensive and varied. The boxes usually carry brewing instructions and tea descriptions.



We can help you learn about the many benefits of drinking green tea. But the truth is one cup of tea a day will not give you all the abundant gains. The jury is out on how many cups are necessary; some say as little as two cups a day while others encourage around five cups – and others say you can drink up to ten cups a day.

Benefits of Drinking Green Tea

Heart Disease: Scientists think green tea works on the lining of blood vessels, helping keep them stay relaxed and better able to withstand changes in blood pressure. It may also protect against the formation of clots, which are the primary cause of heart attacks.

Cholesterol: Green tea reduces bad cholesterol in the blood and improves the ratio of good cholesterol to bad cholesterol.

Weight Loss: Green tea increases the metabolism. The polyphenol found in green tea works to intensify levels of fat oxidation and the rate at which your body turns food into calories.

Diabetes: Green tea apparently helps regulate glucose levels slowing the rise of blood sugar after eating. This can prevent high insulin spikes and resulting fat storage.

Alzheimer's and Parkinson's: It is said to delay the deterioration caused by Alzheimer's and Parkinson's. Studies carried out on mice showed that green tea protected brain cells from dying and restored damaged brain cells.

Tooth Decay: Studies suggests that the chemical antioxidant "catechin" in tea can destroy bacteria and viruses that cause throat infections, dental caries and other dental conditions

Blood Pressure: Regular consumption of green tea is thought to reduce the risk of high blood pressure.

Depression: Theanine is an amino acid naturally found in tea leaves. It is this substance that is thought to provide a relaxing and tranquilizing effect and be a great benefit to tea drinkers.

Anti-viral and Anti-bacterial: Tea catechins are strong antibacterial and antiviral agents, which make them effective for treating everything from influenza to cancer. In some studies green tea has been shown to inhibit the spread of many diseases.

Skincare: Green tea can apparently also help with wrinkles and the signs of aging; this is because of their antioxidant and anti-inflammatory activities. Both animal and human studies have demonstrated that green tea applied topically can reduce sun damage.

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