CAFFEINE: TIPS FOR DECREASING IT COMFORTABLY

These suggestions can help you decrease your caffeine intake.

**Keep a log**
Write down the coffee, tea, and soft drinks you drink for a few days. This will help you understand when and how much you drink.

**Take it slowly**
Decrease intake gradually over one or two weeks:
- Eliminate ½ cup (C) of coffee/tea or 1 C of soda (about two-thirds of a can or one half of a 20-ounce bottle) each day.
- Start eliminating the coffee, tea, and soft drinks that you drink in the afternoon or evening to help with restoring restful sleep—you will have more energy during the day and feel less need for caffeine if you get proper sleep.

**Find a substitute**
Have a substitute beverage instead of coffee, tea, or soft drinks.

Try drinking:
- Water
- A hot grain beverage, such as Teechino® or Pero®
- Herbal tea
- Sugar-free lemonade or fruit drink
- A small glass of juice or milk

**Stay active**
Exercise or keep active during the times that you used to drink coffee, tea, and soft drinks. If you get adequate activity, you will have more energy and feel less need for caffeine.

Try these suggestions:
- Go for a walk
- Clean your room/apartmenthouse
- Dance to your favorite CD

**Improve your nutrition**
Many people drink coffee, tea, and soft drinks instead of eating. You should eat a well-balanced meal three times a day.
Caffeine: Why You Should Avoid It

Medication side effects
Caffeine may cause more medication side effects. It interacts with medications and may increase side effects, such as:

- Irritability
- Trouble sleeping
- Possible seizures
- Possible heart rhythm changes

Anxiousness
You can become anxious. Caffeine is a stimulant that increases anxiety. It can start a panic attack.

Addiction
You can become addicted. You will keep using caffeine despite the problems it causes. You will feel you are unable to cut down. You will need more and more to get the same effect, and will experience withdrawal symptoms if you quit.

Poor sleep
You can have trouble sleeping. Caffeine delays sleep, reduces sleep time, and decreases the quality of sleep.

Heartburn
You can get heartburn. Caffeine causes an upset stomach.

Dehydration
You can become dehydrated. Caffeine is a diuretic. It takes fluid out of your body.
How Much Caffeine is Too Much?

- 200 milligrams (mg) or more can cause anxiety, panic attacks, poor sleep, and other side effects in some people.

- More than a cup, can, or 20-ounce (oz) bottle per day is possibly too much, if you notice symptoms or if your health care professional has asked you to limit your caffeine intake.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Caffeine Content</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Drip-brewed coffee—5 fluid ounce (fl oz), about half a mug</td>
<td>110–150 mg</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tea—6 fl oz, 5-minute</td>
<td>20–50 mg</td>
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<tr>
<td>Iced tea—12 fl oz</td>
<td>22–36 mg</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mountain Dew®—20 fl oz, bottle</td>
<td>92 mg</td>
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<tr>
<td>Red Bull—16 fl oz, can</td>
<td>160 mg</td>
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<tr>
<td>Powershot—1 2 fl oz, bottle</td>
<td>100–125 mg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barq’s Root Beer—20 fl oz, bottle</td>
<td>33 mg</td>
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<tr>
<td>Milk or dark chocolate—1 oz</td>
<td>1–35 mg</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hot chocolate—5 fl oz</td>
<td>2–15 mg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chocolate milk—8 fl oz</td>
<td>8 mg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chocolate pudding—½ cup (C)</td>
<td>7 mg</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chocolate ice cream—½ C</td>
<td>2 mg</td>
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</tbody>
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References and recommended readings


Contributed by Charlene Dubois, MPA, RD

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