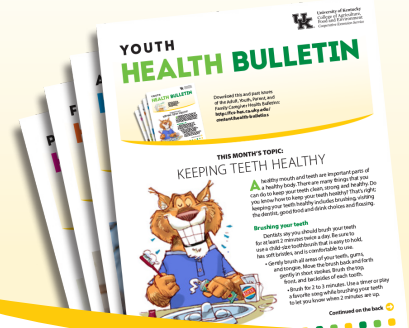


YOUTH

HEALTH BULLETIN



FEBRUARY 2024

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THIS MONTH'S TOPIC

LIMIT CAFFEINE



Maybe you have heard a grownup say that they need coffee in the morning to help them wake up or that energy drinks are dangerous to drink. This is because some drinks, like coffee and energy drinks, have caffeine in them. Caffeine is a chemical found in certain plants that we use to make foods and drinks, such as tea leaves, coffee beans, cacao (used to make chocolate), and kola nuts (used to give cola soda its flavor). Caffeine is a stimulant which means it can make us feel more awake. Many people drink caffeine because they think it helps them to wake up or think more clearly. But no one needs caffeine, especially kids.

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Kids should mostly drink water throughout the day and milk with meals.

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People who drink caffeine every day may start to feel like they need it. If regular caffeine users don't get their daily dose, they can begin to feel bad. People who are used to caffeine and don't get it can have headaches or trouble focusing and feel tired or grumpy. Caffeine can make you feel hyper or make it difficult to focus. A lot of caffeine can also cause other, not-so-great effects. Too much caffeine can:

- make you feel nervous, jittery, or jumpy. Your hands may shake, or you may not feel like you can sit still;
- make it hard to fall asleep, which might mean you start to feel very tired or sleepy later on; or
- give you a stomachache, headache, or racing heart. People with heart problems should not drink caffeine at all.

Caffeine isn't a nutrient, like calcium, so you don't need it. Kids under 12 should skip drinks with caffeine altogether. Teens should not get more than about 100 mg a day. So how much caffeine



is in certain food and drinks? Below is a list of the average amount of caffeine in common items.

- **Mountain Dew** (12-ounce can): 55 mg
- **Coca-Cola** (12-ounce can): 34 mg
- **7-Up** (12-ounce can): 0 mg
- **Red Bull Energy Drink** (8.3 ounces): 80 mg
- **Brewed coffee**, drip method (5 ounces): 115 mg
- **Iced tea** (12 ounces): 70 mg
- **Dark chocolate** (1 ounce): 20 mg
- **Milk chocolate** (1 ounce): 6 mg

Kids should mostly drink water throughout the day and milk with meals. If you choose a soda or chocolate treat, it is a good idea to read the label to see how much caffeine is in a serving. You can look for drink options such as sparkling water or club soda, which still have carbonation (the fizz that many people like in soda) but do not contain caffeine or sugar.

REFERENCE:

<https://kidshealth.org/en/kids/caffeine.html>



ADULT
HEALTH BULLETIN

Written by:

Katherine Jury, MS

Edited by: Alyssa Simms

Designed by: Rusty Manseau

Cartoon illustrations by:

Chris Ware (© University of Kentucky School of Human Environmental Sciences)

