**Here’s How to Enjoy Caffeine the Healthy Way!**

If a hot cup of coffee is the first thing you think about after waking up in the morning, you’re not alone! According to [research](https://www1.villanova.edu/villanova/studentlife/health/promotion/goto/resources/drugs/caffeine.html) from Villanova University, about 90% of Americans consume caffeine in one form or another every single day. With more than half of American adults consuming more than 300 milligrams of caffeine each day, caffeine is considered to be America’s most popular drug.

For many full-time employees, consuming caffeine is an easy way to get a quick [jolt of energy](http://info.totalwellnesshealth.com/blog/sneaky-ways-to-feel-energized-all-day-long) and feel more [productive in the office](http://info.totalwellnesshealth.com/blog/sneaky-ways-to-feel-more-productive-at-work). However, choosing unhealthy caffeinated beverages or going overboard with caffeine can lead to some negative health consequences – which is why it’s important to make healthy choices when getting your caffeine fix. Below are five tips to help you enjoy caffeine without it disrupting your health:

**Watch out for sugary drinks.**

Many specialty coffee shops or restaurants offer a wide selection of coffee and other caffeinated beverages. And although these drinks might be delicious, many of them are loaded with [added sugars](http://info.totalwellnesshealth.com/blog/8-signs-that-you-are-eating-too-much-sugar) and contain more calories than you might think. For example, the Cinnamon Roll Frappuccino Blended Coffee from Starbucks contains a whopping 85 grams of sugar, along with 510 calories. Keep in mind that the daily sugar recommendations is 25 grams for women and 37.5 grams for men. Other caffeinated beverages like energy drinks and sodas are also loaded with sugars and contain added chemicals. These sugary beverages cause your blood sugar levels to spike and drop rapidly, which can lead to a sugar crash and cause you to [crave even more sugar](http://info.totalwellnesshealth.com/blog/put-down-that-candy-bar-here-are-8-healthy-foods-to-eat-when-your-sugar-craving-kicks-in). Ordering tea or a regular coffee with milk and creamer is a much healthier option that contains little to no sugar.

**Make your coffee healthier.**

According to the [National Coffee Association](http://www.ncausa.org/Industry-Resources/Market-Research), 64% of U.S. consumers drink coffee on a daily basis. It’s one of America’s most popular beverages! And while studies have shown that one to two cups of coffee a day can have some [awesome health benefits](https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/top-13-evidence-based-health-benefits-of-coffee) – like increased metabolic rate and a big dose of antioxidants – adding loads of sugar, syrup, and heavy creamers transforms coffee from a healthy choice into a very unhealthy choice. To keep your daily coffee as healthy as possible, try to avoid adding large amounts of artificial sweeteners, refined sugar, and artificial creamers. Brewing your own coffee at home is an easy way to make sure you know exactly what’s in your coffee!

**Know the guidelines.**

Going overboard with caffeine can lead to some health consequences, like jitteriness, anxiety, heart palpitations, insomnia, nausea, and dizziness. To be safe, it’s best to stick with the recommended guidelines for caffeine consumption to avoid the risk of a caffeine overdose. According to [Mayo Clinic](https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/nutrition-and-healthy-eating/in-depth/caffeine/art-20045678), up to 400 milligrams of caffeine a day appears to be safe for most healthy adults. This is equivalent to about four cups of brewed coffee. It’s also important to know that caffeine can sometimes interact with certain medications, including thyroid medication and anti-depressants. Always check with your doctor to determine a safe amount of caffeine intake, and be sure to check the labels on any caffeinated beverages to determine how much caffeine they contain.

**Drink caffeine *after* a meal.**

While it’s tempting to start off the day with a cup of coffee, it’s better to wait until you have some food in your stomach. Drinking caffeine on an empty stomach can potentially cause damage to your stomach lining and lead to indigestion and heartburn. This is because coffee jumpstarts your stomach’s acid production. Caffeine on an empty stomach can also suppress your appetite, causing low blood sugar and caffeine cravings. Be sure to eat a nutritious breakfast or snack before your morning cup of coffee.

**Set a cut-off time for the day.**

It’s no secret that caffeine can [disrupt your sleep cycle](http://info.totalwellnesshealth.com/blog/heres-how-to-get-a-perfect-nights-sleep). Although a late afternoon latte might sound tempting after work, it’s best to set a cut-off time for caffeine. Most experts suggest not consuming any caffeine for at least four to six hours prior to bedtime. If you really need a late afternoon energy boost, try exercising, meditating, or snacking on some fruit.

Sipping on some coffee is a delicious way to feel more productive (and a lot less grumpy!) at work. By making some healthy choices, caffeine can be a safe and healthy way to get the energy you need to get started in the morning. So, go ahead and sip on that coffee – and get ready to rule the day!