

Coffee Is Even More Beneficial for Those Over 45

Analysis by [Dr. Joseph Mercola](#)

February 21, 2024

STORY AT-A-GLANCE

- › Research has emerged showing benefits for regular coffee drinkers, but particular advantages were found for individuals age 45 and older
- › Among those aged 45 and over, every two cups of daily coffee lowered the risk of dying during the study period by 30%; no such association was seen in younger adults
- › The study also noted a 22% decreased risk of all-cause mortality when study participants who drank four cups a day added two additional cups of coffee per day to their regimen

Editor's Note: This article is a reprint. It was originally published September 11, 2017.

If you've ever heard of people who drink a lot of coffee every day on a regular basis and thought, "Whoa – that can't be good," you may not be right after all. Some may think drinking four to six cups a day is too much, but scientists say it actually might be good for you. Keep in mind, though that a true "cup" – an actual measure of 16 tablespoons – is an important distinction, because some of the giant mugs many like to use often hold twice that and more.

The remarkable thing for coffee lovers is that your attachment to your cup of joe is even better for them after age 45. In fact, a 10-year study presented at the European Society of Cardiology Congress in Barcelona showed that people who drank four cups of coffee per day had a 64% decrease in their risk of dying from any cause.

Among those aged 45 and over, however, every two cups of daily coffee lowered the risk of dying during the study period by 30%; no such association was seen in younger adults.

In a study of 19,896 participants from the Mediterranean region,¹ which hadn't been the subject of a coffee-related study as so many other regions have been, researchers found that coffee not only is good for you but also shows an inverse association between coffee consumption and all-cause mortality. It began in 1999 with the purpose of discovering how a decade of coffee consumption would impact their health. According to the study:

*"On entering the study, participants completed a previously validated semi-quantitative food frequency questionnaire to collect information on coffee consumption, lifestyle and sociodemographic characteristics, anthropometric measurements, and previous health conditions. Patients were followed-up for an average of 10 years."*²

As it is with most other studies of this type, factors such as gender, lifestyle, overall health, diet and other sociodemographic information was considered along with such health-impacting lifestyle choices as whether or not the participants smoked or added sugar to their coffee, but in all the cases, such factors didn't impact the lowered death risk for coffee drinkers.

Coffee Is Good for You, Especially if You're Middle-Aged

The 64% lower mortality risk was observed for the study subjects who drank at least four cups of coffee per day in comparison with people who never drank it. Here's another interesting factoid: The study also noted a 22% decreased risk of all-cause mortality when those who drank four cups a day added another two cups on top of it, indicating a protective effect.

While participants' average age at the beginning of the study was just over 37, those who were at least 45 when the study began stood out for benefits received — a 30%

lower risk of death in the next 10 years for every two cups of coffee consumed daily.³ In people younger than 45, there didn't seem to be any significant impact on either lowering or increasing the study participants' mortality.

However, Time noted that the study couldn't necessarily prove a cause-and-effect relationship between coffee drinking and mortality rates. Lead study author Dr. Adela Navarro, a cardiologist at Hospital de Navarra in Pamplona, Spain, explained that the outcomes of their research were most advantageous for healthy people.

One of Navarro's observations following the study was that no matter what inroads are made to benefit health, observed from the number of lives that may have been lengthened due to this one diet decision — **drinking coffee** — "Even a small health effect could have important public health consequences."

However, as Medicine Net observed, "Research presented at medical meetings should be viewed as preliminary because they haven't been published in a peer-reviewed medical journal."⁴

What Other Coffee Studies Have Discovered

The results of the study in Spain echoes what other researchers have found, Time⁵ noted, citing several studies conducted over the past few years. Food and Chemical Toxicology⁶ published a study in early 2017, reporting that up to four 8-ounce cups of coffee per day (or about 400 milligrams of caffeine) is safe for most people.

While that study also suggested pregnant women can drink three cups a day without incurring health risks, I strongly recommend pregnant women avoid coffee and other sources of caffeine. However, for most people organic coffee can be a healthy beverage choice. Health.org quoted the study's lead author, Daniele Wikoff, Ph.D., who reported:

"After decades of research and thousands of papers, we know a lot about caffeine. And what our findings truly confirm is that having caffeine as part of your daily diet is still acceptable and without adverse effects."⁷

Two studies published in the *Annals of Internal Medicine* in mid-2017 also found a link between regular coffee consumption and a lower mortality risk. One was conducted among a varied group of individuals in the U.S, including Latinos, African-Americans, Caucasians, Native Hawaiians and Japanese-Americans. Interestingly, higher coffee consumption was linked to a lower risk for death for everyone except Native Hawaiians.⁸

The second took place among people in 10 countries throughout Europe and involved more than 521,000 people. Among Europeans, the researchers reported an association between coffee consumption and lowered risk of death from any cause, and the relationship had no variance between countries.⁹

People who drank more coffee were found to have a 7% to 12% lower risk of dying prematurely, including decreased heart-related conditions such as stroke and digestive diseases, the study revealed. The results included people who drank decaffeinated coffee, not just the leaded variety.

What's so Great About Coffee?

Just like other plant-based foods, coffee has its own unique set of phytonutrients and beneficial compounds that can positively impact your health, such as those already known to fight inflammation, one of the most common and insidious contributors to age-related health challenges.

One thing many people aren't yet aware of is that dark roast coffee, as opposed to light or medium roast coffees, may be more effective at reducing body weight, in restoring red blood cell vitamin E and glutathione concentrations, one study notes.¹⁰

HealthLine¹¹ notes several other valuable health benefits you can get from that good-morning brew, which Statistic Brain says is enjoyed by 54% of the American population, which would be a cool 100 million.¹²

Coffee is said to improve energy levels and block an inhibitory neurotransmitter called adenosine. This in turn boosts other neurotransmitters such as norepinephrine and

dopamine, leading to enhanced firing of neurons. The upshot is that brain function is improved, along with memory and general cognitive function.¹³

Coffee can help you burn fat because it boosts your metabolism¹⁴ and drastically improves physical performance, not just in increased adrenaline for sharper "fight or flight" skills – or agility and stamina during exercise¹⁵ – but because it breaks down body fat and turns it into fuel.¹⁶

As studies have it, drinking coffee may lower your risk of Type 2 diabetes, which affects about 300 million people globally,¹⁷ as well as your risk of developing Parkinson's disease by as much as 60%.¹⁸ Additionally, coffee contains phytonutrients that enhance your health in several different ways, including providing healthy amounts of riboflavin, pantothenic acid, potassium, magnesium, manganese and niacin in every cup.¹⁹

Having four or more cups of coffee a day may also help you fight depression, improve your liver health and lower your risk of several types of cancer, as well as the possibility of heart disease and stroke. It may also supply more antioxidants than anything else in the standard Western diet.²⁰

It's Not Coffee That's Harmful; It's Not Even Caffeine – It's the Bad Additives

As I've said before, it's important to understand that it's not the caffeine that compromises your health when you drink coffee (provided you don't overdo it); it's all the things people routinely put in it, along with the pesticides in conventionally grown varieties, that has the potential to make it really bad for you. As Health.com explains:

"Plain coffee ... is rich in antioxidants and may reduce the risk of heart disease, stroke and diabetes. Soda and fancy coffee concoctions, on the other hand, can be high in calories or contain artificial sweeteners, while energy drinks can contain sugar and other stimulants that have been associated with health risks."²¹

But if you're like many people, black coffee isn't your cup of tea. You might prefer some flavor and a little sweetness, which can be had without harming your health if you use a little cinnamon for a warming flavor, and stevia for sweetness rather than sugar, as it's a completely natural, plant-derived sweetener with zero calories, doesn't raise your glucose index, and is not linked to the many dangers artificial sweeteners have been shown to cause.

Then there's fake coffee creamer, which often doesn't even have dairy in it and is usually loaded with sugar, or, worse, artificial sweeteners such as that cleverly named concoction meant to sound much like sugar, or sucrose, known as sucralose.

If you're one of the millions who love the little jolt they get from caffeine, which may translate at least to some degree to weight loss due to increased energy expenditure, you may want to take a look at MCT (medium-chain triglycerides) oil added to your coffee, which offers a kick of much-desired fat-burning capability. Here's how to make fat-burning Keto coffee (and watch for yourself in the video below):

Place 1 tablespoon of MCT oil in a small food processor. Add 1 tablespoon of raw, grass fed butter and pour in 1 cup of organic, shade-grown coffee. Process for 20 to 30 seconds, and pour your pleasantly creamy, tasty coffee back into your mug to enjoy.

Finally, be aware that conventionally grown coffee is one of the most chemically contaminated foods in the world. In contrast, organic coffee contains no chemicals or synthetic fertilizers. The beans have a richer flavor and come with natural antioxidants. It's healthy for you, more sustainable for the farms that grow it and vastly better for the planet.

Additionally, coffee is a shade-loving plant, but growers often strip forests to make growing and harvesting easier. This destroys the ecological habitat of many natural pest deterrents, such as birds and lizards, while the pests flourish, resulting in additional pesticide use. For both your health and the environment, organic, shade-grown coffee is far preferable to conventionally grown varieties.

Sources and References

- ^{1, 4, 9} [European Heart Journal. Coffee Consumption and All-Cause Mortality. August 29, 2017](#)
- ² [European Society of Cardiology August 27, 2017](#)
- ^{3, 5} [Time August 29, 2017](#)
- ⁶ [Food and Chemical Toxicology April 21, 2017](#)
- ^{7, 21} [Health.com April 26, 2017 \(Archived\)](#)
- ⁸ [Annals of Internal Medicine Association of Coffee Consumption With Total and Cause-Specific Mortality Among Nonwhite Populations August 15, 2017](#)
- ¹⁰ [Mol Nutr Food Res. 2011 Oct;55\(10\):1582-6](#)
- ^{11, 12} [Johns Hopkins. 9 Reasons Why \(the Right Amount of\) Coffee Is Good for You](#)
- ¹³ [Brain Res Brain Res Rev. 1992 May-Aug;17\(2\):139-70](#)
- ¹⁴ [Am J Clin Nutr January 2004 Volume 79, No. 1, pp 40-46](#)
- ¹⁵ [Med Sci Sports Exerc. 1994 Apr;26\(4\):453-8](#)
- ¹⁶ [Clin Pharmacol Ther. 1980 Sep;28\(3\):398-403](#)
- ¹⁷ [Arch Intern Med. 2009;169\(22\):2053-2063](#)
- ¹⁸ [Front Neurosci. 2020; 14: 602697. December 17, 2020](#)
- ¹⁹ [Nutrition Data Coffee 2014 \(Archived\)](#)
- ²⁰ [J Nutr. March 1, 2004 Volume 134, No. 3, pp 562-567](#)