



Safety Talk

Caffeine

If you're tired or you need a kick start to your morning, will a shot of caffeine really help?

The short answer is: Maybe. But just a little and there are some side effects to consider. Caffeine is definitely a stimulant and can make people more aware and alert. That can lead to more productivity or better safety awareness. However, the effects vary person-to-person and there are some significant limitations that we should all be aware of.

Caffeine is a stimulant, but it is also a diuretic. It will take fluid from the body leaving a person dehydrated. Dehydration can lead to some serious health risks. The stimulant factor isn't always desired either, like when we are trying to fall asleep at night. Those who might have high blood pressure generally should not consume caffeine either. Lastly, those who have made caffeine a habit to get through the day will see decreased benefit over time, and could suffer short term adverse symptoms if intake is stopped suddenly.

A 7-ounce cup of brewed coffee contains between 80 to 130 milligrams of caffeine. Colas and tea average about half that amount. The American Dietetic Association's Complete Food and Nutrition Guide reads, "for most healthy adults, moderate amounts of caffeine, 200 to 300 milligrams a day, or about two cups of coffee poses no physical problem." So if you hit the drive-thru each morning and order the grande brewed coffee (16-20 oz.), you have reached the recommended daily limit for caffeine intake.

Lastly, if you find yourself in one of these categories, you may want to eliminate caffeine entirely:

- Have been substituting coffee in place of water and juice in your diet
- Are pregnant or nursing a child
- Are having trouble falling asleep
- Have a medical condition such as high blood pressure, gastritis or ulcers



We all want to be alert and ready to take on the workplace safely, but we should be able to do so without stimulants. A better alternative is to get more sleep, avoid TV right before bedtime, drink plenty of water and exercise regularly.

SOURCE: toolboxtopics.com



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