

? **Myth:** A big cup of extra strong black coffee will get me past the Breathalyser.

✓ **Truth:** No! This is one of the most popular myths about caffeine. True, it may make you feel a little sharper but it's no better at sobering you up and lowering your blood alcohol level than a glass of water.

? **Myth:** Caffeine is good for complex reasoning tasks

✓ **Truth:** Studies have shown that caffeine may not be good for complex reasoning tasks.

## Suggestions to Help Break Free from Caffeine Addiction

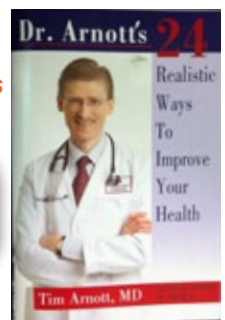
1. Reduce caffeine intake over a two week period.
2. Avoid periods of inactivity.
3. Avoid concentrated sweets and foods high in oil content.
4. Avoid consuming the other products caffeine drinks are usually consumed with - cigarettes and alcohol.
5. Use tepid showers combined with a brisk rub down when the craving arises.
6. Keep hydrated. Drink plenty of water.
7. Use non caffeine containing herb teas to replace the social habit of a cup of coffee, tea.
8. On waking hydrate with a glass of water and a juice of one lemon.
9. Treat withdrawal headaches with a hot foot bath if there is no arterial blood flow reduction in the legs and feet. Use a cold cloth on the forehead if sweating occurs
10. Place a cup of the 'brown drink' in the refrigerator. If withdrawal symptoms become too severe take a teaspoonful and then wait thirty minutes before taking another teaspoon full, if needed.
11. Activated charcoal is a known detoxifying agent which removes toxins from the digestive tract. Activated charcoal tablets or powder may be used to assist as the person goes through the caffeine withdrawal process.

## Suggestions for Replacing the Fiend, Caffeine

1. Keep a bottle of water handy at all times.
2. Drink herbal teas or coffees which don't contain caffeine. Available in supermarkets and health food stores
3. Instead of eating chocolate for a snack try fruit in season.
4. Substitute carob for chocolate. Carob bars, carob powder, carob molasses provide an alternative to chocolate. Available in many supermarkets and health food stores (Available at Steps to Life)

## More Health Information & Products (Available at Steps to Life)

### Dr Arnotts 24 Realistic Ways to Improve Your Health



### Carob Products - Chocolate Alternative



### Activated Charcoal Tablets, Capsules & Powder



Online Shop: [www.steps.org.au/Shop/](http://www.steps.org.au/Shop/)  
Phone: (03) 9739 4093  
Email: [admin@steps.org.au](mailto:admin@steps.org.au)



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# Caffiend!!



## What Does the Fiend, Caffeine and Associated Chemicals, Do to You?

Caffeine is the most widely used behavioural drug in the world. World consumption has been estimated to be 120,000 tonnes per year. This is approximately one caffeine containing drink per day for each of the world's six billion inhabitants. Over the years many scientific studies have been undertaken to determine the effect of caffeine on people. The studies have shown that while there are some effects which can be beneficial (alertness, temporary increased energy) most are short term and not without an associated immediate or longer term cost. **Consuming caffeine in our beverages and foods is like borrowing funds which have to be repaid with a high rate of interest. The more you borrow the more you have to pay back!!**

Effects of the fiend, caffeine (by itself or in combination with other chemicals found in the products it comes in) which may impair a person's health include –

1. Can lead to an addiction which is hard to break having symptoms of jitters, tremors, restlessness, dizziness; elevates blood pressure, blood sugar and cholesterol in the blood and increases blood coagulation time increasing risk of thrombosis; aggravates gastric secretion leading to gastric ulcers, a contributor to the formation of fibrocystic disease in breasts (Fibrocystic disease is believed to be a contributor to breast cancer in women);
2. Studies have linked birth defects with coffee drinking; can reduce iron absorption; a minor contributor to osteoporosis; can be a contributor to bladder cancer; interferes with sleep; can contribute to PMS; caffeine intake is often associated with other addictions such as tobacco and alcohol; blocks adenosine a neurotransmitter, causing a release of adrenaline resulting in dilated pupils and tightened muscles; acts as a diuretic contributing to dehydration; caffeine speeds up the aging process of the body;
3. Caffeine increases the production of estrogen in your body, which can lead to estrogen dominance. (Estrogen dominance can be indicative of further complications. Women may experience menstrual issues, loss of libido, fibroids or endometriosis. Men are affected as well and can experience weight gain, male-pattern baldness, loss of libido, prostate issues and gynecomastia—which is breast development in men.); can prevent healthy bowel movements (It dehydrates the body, depriving it of needed water to process food. It also obstructs the absorption of the very important chemical magnesium, which is necessary to maintain healthy bowel movements.); caffeine constricts the cerebral blood vessels; two or three cups of coffee a day can lower a baby's birth weight.

This list is not exhaustive. You can easily gain more information from an internet search.

## Are You Overdosing on Caffeine?

Some authorities state that drinking more than 5 - 6 cups of coffee or 4 - 5 cans of energy drinks everyday is regarded as an overdose of caffeine. Common symptoms may include restlessness, nervousness, insomnia, excitement, irritability, nausea, diarrhoea and indigestion. There can be other severe side effects of caffeine overdose like irregular heartbeat, frequent urination, anxiety, depression, hallucination, mania, sleep disorders, memory loss and lack of concentration. Caffeine overdose in pregnant women can lead to a miscarriage or underdevelopment of the fetus.

## Where Do You Encounter the Fiend?

Caffeine is a chemical found in some soft drinks/sodas, tea, coffee and to a lesser extent in chocolate and chocolate drinks. It is a naturally occurring chemical found in the leaves, seeds and fruit in excess of sixty species of plants grown around the world. Tea leaves, coffee beans, cocoa beans (for chocolate), guarana and kola nuts (added to cola drinks) are the most common sources.

## Friends of the Fiend – Substances in the Brown Drinks – Cola, Coffee, Cocoa, Chocolate and Tea

Caffeine is the common name for 1,3,7-trimethylxanthine. When purified, caffeine produces an intensely bitter white powder that provides a distinctive taste in soft drinks. The word "caffeine" came from the German word *kaffee* and the French word *café*, each meaning coffee. After ingesting caffeine, it is completely absorbed within 30 to 45 minutes, and its effects substantially diminish within about three hours.

Caffeine, the major alkaloid in the brown drinks is often associated with a range of other substances that are not health promoting. They include – chlorogenic acid in coffee (cause of intense food allergies); theophylline and theobromine in coffee, chocolate. (effects include abnormal gland growth, central nervous system stimulation, sleeplessness, depression, anxiety, upset stomachs, flushing of skin, possible prostate enlargement, sugar to counteract the bitterness (interferes with calcium absorption, reduces ability of white blood cells to destroy germs, interferes with thinking processes, causes irritability in children, dental disease, etc.),

It is worth noting that theobromine can be toxic or lethal to dogs and other domestic animals such as horses. (because these animals







metabolize theobromine more slowly than humans. The heart, central nervous system, and kidneys are affected. Early signs of theobromine poisoning in dogs include nausea and vomiting, restlessness, diarrhoea, muscle tremors, and increased urination or incontinence.)

## Caffeine Content in Some Common Food Products

Food Item	Common Glass	350ml
Coke Classic & Coke Zero	23 mg	34.5 mg
Diet Coke	31 mg	46.5 mg
Pepsi	25 mg	37.5 mg
Diet Pepsi	24 mg	36 mg
Typical Coffee, Espresso and Tea		
Espresso (60ml)	100 mg	
Coffee, Instant	65 - 100 mg	
Coffee, Decaffeinated	3 - 4.5 mg	
Coffee, Brewed	135 - 202.5 mg	
Tea, Green	15 - 22.5 mg	
Tea, Leaf or Bag	50 mg - 75 mg	
Chocolate		
Dark Chocolate - 1 Large Block	31 mg	
Milk Chocolate - 1 Bar	10mg	
Chocolate Milk - 7.5 mg	5mg	

NOTE: There are many products on the supermarket shelves containing caffeine. They are chocolate flavoured, or chocolate coated or have chocolate added in. Check the ingredients to ascertain the amount of caffeine.

## Caffeine Myths

-  **Myth:** Decaffeinated coffee & tea is caffeine-free.
-  **Truth:** Decaffeinated coffee and tea still have a small amount of caffeine in them. The decaffeination process removes about 98% of the caffeine, but there is still some there.
-  **Myth:** Coffee will help a hangover.
-  **Truth:** No! Caffeine, be it in coffee or other things, won't help someone "sober up".