

## How Gourmet Coffee Can Benefit Health

The reports we hear and see about the benefits and risks of drinking coffee can be confusing. Some reports say that drinking coffee offers many health benefits. While other reports say that drinking coffee carries health risks. One week the gourmet coffee you love to drink is good for you; the next week it is bad for you.

A lot of the confusion begins with the caffeine content found in coffee. It is the caffeine that makes coffee such a stimulating drink. Caffeine gives you a quick energy boost and may even help you focus more on what you are doing and can help you remember details a little better. But caffeine has also been shown to cause health risks when consumed in large amounts. How much is too much is hotly debated in health circles, and a clear consensus on the allowable amount of caffeine that can be consumed daily without risking health, remains to be reached. Taking a more cautious stance on the suggested amounts of caffeine that can safely be consumed however, many health experts do recommend a limiting of no more than 3 cups of caffeinated coffee per day for coffee drinkers, and reducing caffeine intake from other beverages like teas and sodas.

Lost in the shadows of all the debating over caffeine in coffee are the health benefits that gourmet coffee, for example, offers. Gourmet coffee is derived from the seed or bean of the Arabica coffee plant. It has far less caffeine content than the coffee that is made from the seeds of other varieties of the coffee plant. The Arabica coffee plant is typically grown in elevations ranging from 1000 to more than 5,500 feet above sea level, and in regions with rich soils and climates that foster the healthy growth and development of this plant. Because of these conditions, the beans retain higher amounts of their healthy properties while less-desirable properties such as caffeine are reduced.

The gourmet coffee bean used in the brewing of gourmet coffee for drinking, is full of antioxidants that offer us protection against the radicals that are present in our bodies and that can make us sick and even make us more susceptible to major conditions like heart disease and cancers. The conditions under which the gourmet coffee bean is grown permits less use of pesticides which are harmful to humans, animals, plants, and the environment. When pesticides are used to control insect infestations and plant diseases, they can infiltrate the plant and remain there even after processing, although usually in lesser amounts. But consuming pesticides in any amounts from the foods we eat and the beverages we drink is not good for our health. They can cause serious and even deadly risks to our health when consumed regularly because the level of pesticides grows higher than what our bodies has natural defenses to fight. Other harmful substances are often added to foods and drinks made available for consumers to extend shelf life and enhance appearance that can harm our health as well.

The antioxidant properties in gourmet coffee can help the body to fight off the harmful effects of the pesticide residuals and added substances we ingest from the foods and beverages we consume. Antioxidants help the body to neutralize these radicals before they can develop into serious and deadly diseases. Other properties in gourmet coffee beans have been shown to reduce the risks for developing heart disease for many coffee drinkers who are at higher risk for heart disease.

Caffeine can of course give you a quick burst of energy and this is why many people drink coffee. But the other properties in the gourmet coffee bean and present in the brewed coffee we drink interact with chemicals in the brain to elevate mood, and improve powers of concentration and comprehension. These attributes are viewed as health benefits that can result from the consuming of gourmet coffee.

Drinking coffee has long been a social activity and sharing a cup of coffee with a friend or in a group setting benefits us by meeting the basic human need we all have of connecting socially with other human beings. In unfamiliar surroundings and settings, drinking coffee offers the comfort of something familiar to the coffee drinker, which can reduce the stress of being in a new place or with new people.

The health benefits gained by drinking gourmet coffee far outweigh the risks associated with caffeine consumption when you take care not to consume more caffeine than is recommended. Two or three cups of gourmet coffee a day should not present a risk to your health. You should be aware of how much caffeine you are consuming daily in other beverages and substitute decaffeinated versions of your favorite gourmet coffee and beverages to keep caffeine consumption levels under control.