

Potential risks of daily caffeine consumption

Caffeine, a common stimulant compound, is found in many products such as coffee, black tea, carbonated soft drinks, energy drinks and chocolate, which are favorite foods of many people.

Caffeine, a common stimulant found in many popular products such as coffee, black tea, soda, energy drinks, and chocolate, is considered safe when consumed in moderation, but excessive intake—especially through dietary supplements or among children—can lead to serious health consequences.

Safety limits and physiological effects

According to German biologist Dr. Anke Ehlers, caffeine in moderate doses (200 mg/single dose) has the effect of stimulating the central nervous system, improving alertness. However, consumption beyond this threshold can cause symptoms such as increased sweating, anxiety, heart rhythm disturbances, and even affect the development of the fetus during pregnancy. Acute poisoning due to the use of functional foods containing pure caffeine can lead to death.

Recommended dosage for healthy adults:

1. Maximum single dose: **200mg caffeine** (~2 cups of filter coffee, 2 cans of 250ml energy drinks).
2. Total daily intake: **400mg**, evenly distributed throughout the day.

It should be noted that caffeine tolerance varies from person to person due to genetics and consumption habits. Regular users may develop tolerance, requiring increased doses to achieve the same effect.



Warnings for dietary supplements containing caffeine

Caffeine supplements in powder or pill form, often used to enhance athletic performance, pose a high risk because of the difficulty in controlling dosage. 'Pure caffeine in its free form is extremely concentrated—200 mg (0.2 g) is a small pinch, whereas 1–2 teaspoons (5–10 g) can cause acute toxicity,' Dr. Ehlers notes.

Impact on children and adolescents

In this group of subjects, the safety limit is calculated according to the formula based on body mass:

1. Maximum daily dose: **3 mg caffeine/kg body weight** .
2. For example, a 4-year-old (17 kg) can consume up to **51 mg of caffeine per day** (~2.5 100 g milk chocolate bars or 500 ml soft drinks).

However, consumption of caffeinated sweets should be closely monitored due to their high sugar content, which increases the risk of obesity and tooth decay.

The risks of energy drinks and alcohol

An average 250ml can of energy drink contains 80 mg of caffeine. In adolescents, consuming 3 cans/day is likely to exceed the safe level. Notably, mixing energy drinks with alcohol increases the negative effects on the cardiovascular system. Dr. Ehlers explains: "Both caffeine and ethanol stimulate the release of catecholamines, leading to arrhythmias and hypertension. This combination exacerbates the side effects."

Managing caffeine intake requires an understanding of its source, recommended dosages, and individual physiology. Health authorities should increase public education, especially among adolescents and parents, to reduce the risks associated with this compound.

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