

Coffee is Good For Your Teeth??

The latest research puts coffee in the 'good-for-you' camp. A study published in the 27 February issue of the *Journal of Agricultural and Food Chemistry*, the publication of the American Chemical Society, shows that coffee made from roasted coffee beans has antibacterial activities against certain micro-organisms, including *Streptococcus mutans* (*S. mutans*), a major cause of dental caries (**cavities**).

The journal article states that two scientists at two Italian universities conducted laboratory tests that showed some coffee molecules prevent adhesion of *S. mutans* on tooth enamel. "*All coffee solutions have high anti-adhesive properties due to both naturally occurring and roasting-induced molecules,*" said the study's lead author, Gabriella Gazzani of the University of Pavia.

"All of the tested samples inhibited S. mutans adsorption and showed inhibitory activity ranging from 40.5 per cent to 98.1 per cent," according to the research article. However, the article adds that *"all green [unroasted beans] coffee samples were significantly less active than the corresponding roasted coffees"*. **Who eats/drinks unroasted coffee beans???**

The researchers examined caffeine and non-caffeine samples of ground and instant coffee, and found that it had a slightly higher level of inhibitory activity against *S. mutans*. As for caffeine and decaf, the results seem to indicate that *"caffeine is not involved in the anti-adhesive properties of coffee solutions"*.

But is that the whole story???

Here is the problem: you often sweeten your coffee with sugar and dairy—both of which contain basic sugars therefore counteract coffees natural cavity fighting properties. Bacteria in the mouth break these sugars down into acids—and it is the acid that destroys tooth structure—this is the process of decay. Artificial sweeteners have been shown to be cavity causing as well because bacteria mutate and figure out how to break these down into acid too. And of course, continual coffee consumption frequently stain and darken your teeth because the dark solution is absorbed between the enamel rods which make up the structure of your tooth's crown. Whitening products are safe and effective and can lighten the shade of your teeth significantly. In office procedures such as Zoom can accomplish this in as little as an hour and then take home trays with touch up kits can maintain the shade and keep your teeth from returning to the dark side.

To permanently change the shade of teeth other options are available. Porcelain veneers and Crowns can dramatically improve the shape, shade, and length of your teeth in as little as 2 visits.

Coffee has shown to have other healthy benefits for the whole body because of its high in antioxidant content:

After analyzing data on 126,000 people for as long as 18 years, Harvard researchers calculate that compared with not partaking in America's favorite morning drink, downing one to three cups of caffeinated coffee daily can reduce diabetes risk by single digits. But having six cups or more each day slashed men's risk by 54% and women's by 30% over java avoiders.

Also "The evidence is very strong that regular coffee consumption reduces risk of Parkinson's disease and for that, it's directly related to caffeine," DePaulis tells WebMD. "In fact, Parkinson's drugs are now being developed that contain a derivative of caffeine based on this evidence."

Caffeine is also what helps in treating asthma and headaches. Though not widely publicized, a single dose of pain reliever such as Anacin or Excedrin contains up to 120 milligrams—equivalent to a hefty mug o' Joe.

But avoiding the dentist can have dramatic affects on your overall health.

According to the Mayo Clinic--Here's a look at some of the diseases and conditions that may be linked to oral health:

- **Cardiovascular disease.** Research shows that several types of cardiovascular disease may be linked to oral health. These include heart disease, clogged arteries, stroke and bacterial endocarditis. Some researchers believe that bacteria from gum disease can enter your bloodstream and travel through your arteries to your heart, affecting your cardiovascular system. Although periodontal disease seems to be associated with heart disease, more studies are needed before the link can be confirmed with certainty.
- **Pregnancy and birth.** Gum disease has been linked to premature birth. Some research has shown that disease-causing organisms in a pregnant woman's mouth can wind up in the placenta or amniotic fluid, possibly causing premature birth. Unfortunately, treating periodontal disease during pregnancy may be too late, because the infection may have already spread in the woman's body. This is why it's vital to maintain excellent oral health before you get pregnant.
- **Diabetes.** Diabetes increases your risk of gum disease, cavities, tooth loss, dry mouth, and a variety of oral infections. Conversely, poor oral health can make your diabetes more difficult to control. Infections may cause your blood sugar to rise and require more insulin to keep it under control.
- **HIV/AIDS.** In some cases, one of the first signs of AIDS may appear in your mouth, with severe gum infection. You may also develop persistent white spots or unusual lesions on your tongue or in your mouth.
- **Osteoporosis.** The first stages of bone loss may show up in your teeth. Your dentist may be able to spot this on routine dental X-rays. If bone loss worsens from year to year, your dentist can suggest that you discuss the issue with your other health care providers.
- **Other conditions.** Many other conditions may make their presence known in your mouth before you know anything's wrong. These may include Sjogren's syndrome, certain cancers, eating disorders, syphilis, gonorrhea and substance abuse.

So you can see how very important regular dental visits are and how avoiding the dentist can have severely adverse affects on your overall health. The truth is that the bacteria in the mouth replicate and double every 30 days reaching destructive levels in just 90 days--so people with gum disease can have bone loss in as little as 3 months!! Research keeps finding new links between oral health and the health of your body everyday. The latest study was done on pancreatic cancer the 4th deadliest form of cancer. Here's what they found:

the Harvard School of Public Health (HSPH) and Dana-Farber Cancer Institute found that periodontal disease was associated with an increased risk of cancer of the pancreas. The study will appear in the January 17, 2007 issue of the *Journal of the National Cancer Institute*.

Data for the new study came from the Health Professionals Follow-Up Study, which began in 1986 and includes 51,529 U.S. men working in the health professions. Participants

respond to questionnaires about their health every two years. After analyzing the data, the researchers confirmed 216 cases of pancreatic cancer between 1986 and 2002; of those, 67 reported periodontal disease.

The results showed that, after adjusting for age, smoking, diabetes, body mass index and a number of other factors, men with periodontal disease had a 63% higher risk of developing pancreatic cancer compared to those reporting no periodontal disease. "Most convincing was our finding that never-smokers had a two-fold increase in risk of pancreatic cancer," said Michaud.

So that's the latest information about your mouth!! I know time slips by and seeking a dentist often gets put off until there is a problem or pain. I just wanted to let you know -we understand and don't lecture our patients about not having been in for so long. The key thing is to take care of any problems, create a great recare system for you and make sure you keep your teeth and gums healthy for a lifetime which will in turn keep your whole body healthier!! Below are some amazing incentives just to come see us and find out how your mouth is doing. Hope you learned something and hope to see you soon.

Yours in Dental Health,

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