



Caffeine and energy drinks

Caffeine is one of our favourite legal drugs. But what does it do to our body and how much is too much?

Coffee and tea both contain caffeine which is a legal but habit forming drug. Caffeine is found in a number of plants including tea, coffee beans and guarana berries.

With coffee and energy drinks becoming more popular in our society, the amount of caffeine, guarana and sugar we consume is on the increase. Did you know that in one cup of flat white coffee there is around 90gm of caffeine, and a 500ml can of Mother, Monster or Rockstar contains around 150 milligrams?

Do you know how much caffeine your child is drinking a day?

The daily recommended dose of caffeine for adults is 200-300 milligrams however there is no recommended dose for young people.

Amounts of caffeine in food and drinks

	Size / amount	Caffeine content
Chocolate, Dark Chocolate Bar	100mg	59mg
Chocolate, Milk Chocolate Bar	55mg	3-20mg
Chocolate, Milk	200mls	2-7mg
Coca Cola	375ml	49mg
Cocoa, Hot Chocolate	150ml	30-60 mg
Coffee, Brewed	250 ml	80 (20-110)mg
Coffee, Cappuccino	100ml	101.9
Coffee, Decaffeinated	150ml	2-4mg
Coffee, Flat White	100ml	87mg
Coffee, Instant	250 ml	60 (12-169)mg
Coffee, Long Black	100ml	75mg
Coffee, Short Black Espresso	1 standard serve	107 (25-214)mg
Coke Zero	473ml	45mg
Dare Double Espresso®	500ml	177mg
Dare Espresso®	500ml	80mg
Diet Coke	100ml	9.7mg
Diet Coke, Caffeine Free	250 ml	2mg
Kopiko Coffee Sweets	One sweet	25mg
Mother Energy Drink	500ml	160mg
Mountain Dew	100ml	15mg
No Doz	1 tablet	200mg
Pepsi Cola	375ml	40mg
Pulse: Vodka, soda and guarana (alcoholic)	300ml	21 mg
Red Bull	100ml	32mg
Red Bull	250ml	80mg
Rockstar Energy Drink	473ml	151mg
Tea, Brewed black	250ml	27 (9-51)mg
Tea, Brewed green tea	100ml	12mg
V Energy Drink	250ml	50mg

Source: National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre, University NSW

So, what's wrong with caffeine?

The effects of caffeine in large doses (more than 600mg or eight average cups of coffee) can include:

- increased alertness and energy
- elevated blood pressure
- increased body temperature
- insomnia
- nervousness and anxiety
- headaches
- diarrhoea
- increased urination
- nausea and vomiting
- rapid heart rate, heart palpitations and related heart problems
- alterations to mood and even delirium.

Caffeine, energy drinks and sport

Players often say they are using caffeine or an energy drink to 'give them more energy', but they seem to forget that caffeine is a diuretic that increases dehydration and can affect endurance. In fact, the International Olympic Committee has banned caffeine levels of the equivalent of four strong cups of coffee per day.

Energy drinks and alcohol

Mixing an energy drink with alcohol can increase the chances of a person drinking too much alcohol and taking risks. This is because the caffeine (a stimulant) can mask the effects of alcohol (a depressant).



More information about caffeine can be found on the Australian Drug Foundation website www.adf.org.au