

The Dark Side of Caffeine

By Gayle North

Caffeine is clearly addictive, completely unregulated, and it's presence in our foods and beverages is often hidden! ...Coffee, tea, soft drinks, caffeine-spiked beverages and other hidden forms of caffeine are promoted as harmless energizing treats.

Everyone...needs to become aware of caffeine's role in cardiovascular disease, anxiety, depression, gastrointestinal disorders, and women's health. — *Jesse Lynn Hanley, MD from the foreword in Steven Cherniske's book "Caffeine Blues"*

Are you planning to improve your health and your self care in 2007? If so, you may want to reduce your caffeine intake as a first step! Caffeine is a drug linked to palpitations, panic attacks, hypoglycemia, gastritis, insomnia, and PMS, to name a few. Some people are so sensitive to caffeine that a fruit drink with hidden caffeine can cause their symptoms. Many people develop increased sensitivity to caffeine in their thirties, forties, or fifties after years of using it.

What is really frightening to me is that so many children are consuming caffeine-spiked products loaded with sugar and artificial sweeteners—which add even more negative side effects. Children are more sensitive to the effects of caffeine and more vulnerable to becoming addicted.

Caffeine Myths Debunked

1. *Caffeine gives you energy.* Wrong. Caffeine does not provide energy—only chemical stimulation. The perceived "energy" comes from the body's struggle to adapt to increased blood levels of stress hormones. This is actually a state of emergency caused by the caffeine. The collective side effects are known as *caffeinism* which, ironically, is characterized by chronic fatigue.
2. *Caffeine gives you a "lift."* Wrong. Using coffee for mood enhancement is a short-term blessing and a long-term curse. While the initial adrenal stimulation may give you a temporary lift, caffeine's ultimate mood effect can be a letdown which can lead to irritability, depression and mood swings.
3. *Caffeine sharpens your mind.* Wrong. While users may feel more alert, the experience is simply one of increased sensory and motor activity (dilated pupils, increased heart rate, and higher blood pressure). The quality of thought and recall is improved no more than the quality of music played at a higher volume or speed. There are convincing arguments backed up by clinical research that caffeine actually decreases overall mental acuity. — *Adapted from "Caffeine Blues" by Stephen Cherniske*

The Alternatives

Decaf is not the answer. The acidity of decaf is higher than regular coffee and can cause acid indigestion and other problems and the caffeine is typically removed with carcinogenic chemicals. If you decide to reduce your caffeine intake, try some of the full bodied herbal coffees at the health food store. You can brew them in your coffee maker and enjoy the ritual and the aromas as you improve your well being.

Just like the tobacco industry snowed the public for years, the coffee industry is trying to convince us that caffeine does no harm. Read "Caffeine Blues" by Stephen Cherniske, M.S. for a well documented expose' of the politics and hidden truths about caffeine. This book will empower you to regain and protect your health.

Gayle North offers Personal Coaching for Positive Change using recently developed empowerment technologies to clear mental and emotional blocks that keep people stuck in unhealthy habits and prevent them from performing at their highest potential in school, sports, relationships, work and finance. Call 406-837-1214 to learn how you can STOP SMOKING IN ONE HOUR and for coaching in person or by phone.

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