NUTRITION Notes

Senior Services OF WICHITA

August 2026

Published monthly for the clients of Meals on Wheels.

Decaf Coffee Vs. Regular Coffee: Which Has More Health Perks? Dieticians Explain

(https://www.prevention.com/food-nutrition/healthy-eating/a71801122/decaf-vs-regular-coffee/)

The health benefits of drinking coffee regularly are well-documented-and that's before the morning pick-me-up from caffeinated coffee that so many people rely on. But if it's decaf coffee vs. regular coffee, is one actually better for you than the other, caffeine content aside?

"The primary difference between regular coffee and decaf coffee is that in decaf coffee, the beans undergo a process in which the caffeine is extracted before they are roasted," explained Anar Allidina, M.P.H., R.D., a registered dietician based in Toronto. This process doesn't remove all the caffeine in the sip, but it comes close. "Decaffeinated coffee generally contains about 2 to 10 milligrams (mg) of caffeine per 8-ounce cup, depending on the bean type and decaffeination method," said Vicki Koenig, R.D., C.D.N., a master's-level registered dietitian based in New Paltz, N.Y. "Brewed coffee typically contains approximately 95 to 165 mg of caffeine per 8-ounce cup."

Are there other key differences between decaf coffee and regular coffee that you should know about? Here's how they compare in terms of nutrient content, possible downsides, and overall health perks.

Decaf coffee vs. regular coffee: Is one healthier than the other?

Is coffee good for you? In short, yes. Coffee beans are incredibly rich in antioxidants, namely polyphenols, chlorogenic acid, and ferulic acid. While caffeine does offer health benefits, most of the perks you can get from drinking coffee come from these powerful plant compounds, which are not extracted during the decaffeination process. That means that decaf coffee still delivers all the same benefits as regular, said Allidina, it just doesn't have the stimulant effect.

Koenig concurred. "Numerous studies indicate that both caffeinated and decaffeinated coffee are associated with lower all-cause mortality," she said. "This supports the belief that the non-caffeine compounds contribute to the observed health benefits. There are more than 100 different compounds in coffee besides caffeine!" According to UCLA Health, surveys of studies conducted on coffee have confirmed that both decaf and caffeinated coffee contain these beneficial compounds and can yield many of the same health benefits.

Continued on Pg 2

Produce Spotlight: Tomatoes

By Isabelle Meyer, M.S., R.D

Nutrition Notes

Tomatoes are in season during the summer, usually from July through September. They taste best when they are fresh and ripe. Tomatoes are easy to add to many meals. You can slice them for sandwiches, chop them into salads or cook them into soups or pasta sauce.

Tomatoes are full of nutrients that help keep your body healthy. They are a good source of vitamin C, which helps support your immune system and keeps your skin healthy. They also provide vitamin A for healthy eyes and potassium, which helps your heart and muscles work well. Tomatoes contain lycopene, a natural plant nutrient that gives them their red color and helps protect your cells.

Recipe: Tomato Cucumber Salad

Ingredients:

For the Dressing:

- 2 T olive oil
- 2 T red wine vinegar
- ¼ tsp garlic powder
- ¼ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp black pepper
- 1 tsp dried parsley
- 1 tsp dried dill

For the Salad:

- 1 English cucumber, diced
- 1 cup cherry tomatoes, halved
- ½ onion, sliced (optional)

Directions:

Whisk the dressing ingredients in a large bowl. Add your cut vegetables and stir to combine. Cover and let sit in the fridge until you're ready to serve. Eat with a source of protein and a grain/starch for a complete and filling meal.

Decaf Coffee Vs. Regular Coffee Continued

Benefits of drinking coffee

So, what are all those impressive benefits? The health perks of coffee have been proven in studies over and over. Research shows that consistent coffee consumption may:

- Reduce your risk of developing type 2 diabetes
- Lower incidence of chronic kidney disease
- Help you live longer
- Reduce your risk of liver disease
- Lower your risk of heart attack and stroke
- Improve the health of your gut microbiome
- Fight inflammation
- Slow cognitive decline

While caffeine does play a role in some of these benefits, it is just one of the healthy compounds present in coffee that supports overall health. As such, you're likely to reap many of these perks whether you choose regular or decaf.

Possible drawbacks of decaf coffee

Decaf and regular coffee likely have the same benefits, but they do have slightly different downsides to consider. Even though decaf coffee does still contain a small amount of caffeine, it's likely not enough to deliver an energy boost, if you're looking to get one from your sip. On the flip side, Koenig said that if you are particularly sensitive to caffeine, even the concentration in decaf (depending on the brew) may be enough to cause side effects like jitters.

Possible drawbacks of regular coffee

In terms of regular coffee, there are risks that come with caffeine consumption. "Agitation, anxiety, palpitations, chest discomfort, gastrointestinal distress, insomnia, and nervousness are sometimes experienced when

Continued on Pg 3

How to Read a Nutrition Facts Label

By Isabelle Meyer, M.S., R.D

Reading a Nutrition Facts label can seem confusing at first. However, it can help you make informed food choices.

Start by looking at the serving size and servings per container. All the information on the label is for one serving. If you eat two servings, you need to double the calories and nutrients listed.

Next, look at the calories. Calories give your body energy, but everyone needs a different amount each day. Try to get most of your calories from foods like fruits, vegetables, whole grains, beans, lean proteins, and healthy fats instead of highly processed foods like chips and sugary drinks.

Pay attention to the nutrients listed as well. Try to choose foods that are higher in fiber and lower in saturated fat, added sugar, and sodium.

The label shows the % Daily Value (%DV) for many nutrients. This tells you how much one serving contributes to the daily recommendation based on a 2,000-calorie diet. Your own needs may be higher or lower. As a general guide, 5% DV or less is low, and 20% DV or more is high.

Think about why you are choosing a food. If you want a filling snack, look for one that is higher in protein and fiber. If you are having a dessert, it is okay to enjoy foods higher in added sugar once in a while. Use the Nutrition Facts label to compare similar foods and choose the option that best fits your needs.

Nutrient-Dense Pantry Staples

By Isabelle Meyer, M.S., R.D

Keeping healthy foods in your pantry makes it easier to prepare meals at home. Pantry foods last a long time, are often low cost, and can be used in many recipes. Choose foods that are high in nutrients like fiber, protein, vitamins, and minerals.

Some good pantry staples include canned beans, canned tuna or salmon, peanut butter, oats, brown rice, whole wheat pasta, and low-sodium canned vegetables. Frozen fruits and vegetables are also great to keep on hand because they stay fresh for months.

Try these easy meal ideas:

- Mix canned beans, brown rice, salsa, and frozen vegetables for a quick burrito bowl.
- Make oatmeal with peanut butter and frozen berries for a filling breakfast.
- Toss whole wheat pasta with canned tomatoes, canned tuna, and Italian seasoning.
- Add canned beans and frozen vegetables to soup for a fast, hearty meal.

Spread peanut butter on whole wheat toast and serve with a piece of fruit for a simple snack. Stocking your pantry with nutrient-dense foods can help you make healthy meals even when you are busy. Start with a few staples and add more over time.

Decaf Coffee Vs. Regular Coffee Continued

drinking regular coffee," said Koenig, though she added that these are more likely to occur after excessive caffeine intake (over six cups of coffee a day) or in older adults. Caffeine is also addictive, she said, and "an abrupt change or decrease in caffeinated coffee can cause withdrawal symptoms." There are also a handful of people who should avoid or limit caffeine, per the National Library of Medicine. These include people who are pregnant or breastfeeding, people who have sleep disorders, migraines, anxiety, arrhythmia, or high blood pressure, and people who take medications that can exacerbate the side effects of caffeine, such as stimulants.

The bottom line

The vast majority of the health benefits of coffee come from the antioxidants and plant compounds present in the brew, which are found in nearly equal concentrations in both decaf and caffeinated coffee. This means that, assuming you aren't drinking more than five or six cups a day, neither decaf nor regular coffee is better for you than the other. It is important to note that if you add lots of sugary sweeteners or creamers to your coffee, the benefits start to decrease, regardless of whether you're sipping regular or decaf. Still, both can be part of a healthy diet.

LET US KNOW WHAT YOU THINK! PLEASE MARK YOUR MENU AT THE END OF THE MONTH AND SEND IT BACK TO US:

Cross through items you don't like.
Circle items you do like.
Put a star in front of items you want to see more often.

Suggested Donation
$10 Monthly

August 2026 - NOON MEALS ARE NOT LATE UNTIL 1:00 P.M.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
3 Turkey Noodle Casserole Sweet Peas Wheat Roll Mango/Papaya Cup	4 Breaded Cod Brown Rice Sliced Carrots Wheat Roll Tartar Sauce Peaches & Crème Parfait	5 Meatloaf Potato Au Gratin Green Beans and Corn Wheat Roll Fruit Cup	6 Chili w/ Beans Scandinavian Vegetables Mini Cinnamon Roll Pineapple/ Orange Cup	7 Baked Chicken Garlic Mashed Potatoes Broccoli Whole Grain Roll Apple Cobbler
10 BBQ Pork Carnitas on Slider Bun California Vegetables Spiced Apples	11 Smothered Turkey Mashed Potatoes Sweet Corn w/ Peppers Whole Wheat Roll Cheesecake w/ Fruit	12 Beef Goulash Normandy Vegetables Garlic Knot Banana Pudding	13 Fish Filet Sandwich Diced Rosemary Garlic Potatoes Creamy Coleslaw Tartar Sauce Fruit Compote	14 Lemon Chicken Mediterranean Brown Rice Corn & Black Beans Corn Tortillas Apricots
17 Beef Pot Roast Stewed Vegetables Wheat Roll Banana Bread Pudding	18 Chicken Fried Chicken Steak Mashed Potatoes & Country Gravy Vegetable Blend Multigrain Roll Fruit Cup	19 BBQ Beef on Wheat Bun Macaroni & Cheese French-Style Green Beans Pears	20 ***(Cold Meal)*** Tuna Salad on Croissant Potato Salad Pineapple Chunks	21 Baked Sliced Ham Maple Roasted Sweet Potatoes Capri Vegetables Whole Grain Roll Pumpkin Pie
24 Cheeseburger w/ Tomato & Onion on a Wheat Bun Sweet Potato Fries Peach Cobbler	25 ***(Cold Meal)*** BLT on Croissant Bacon Broccoli Salad Potato Salad Mayo Black Cherry Jello w/ Mixed Fruit	26 Chicken Drumstick Calico Corn Whole Wheat Honey Roll Fruited Yogurt	27 Garlic Herb Baked Fish Succotash Wheat Roll Mandarin Oranges	28 Sweet & Sour Chicken Vegetable Fried Rice Zucchini/Red Peppers Spiced Peaches
31 Teriyaki Chicken Wild Brown Rice Asian Blend Vegetables Mini Blueberry Muffin Peaches				Milk is Served with Every Meal

IF YOU DO NOT EAT YOUR MEAL WHEN IT ARRIVES - REFRIGERATE IMMEDIATELY!

Published monthly by: Senior Services, Inc. of Wichita | 200 S. Walnut St, Wichita, KS 67213