

THE TEA LEAVES SAY: “DRINKING TEA IS HEALTHY”

Green and black tea may have more health benefits than their well-known calming effect. Several compounds in these leafy plants have been examined in numerous studies and are linked to having beneficial effects on conditions ranging from mental health to cancer.



Tea is not a magical cure-all potion; however, potential benefits on the brain and body are noteworthy.

MEMORY:

Feeling forgetful lately? Tea might help. A study published in Psychopharmacology found that green tea may improve some brain functions including working memory, the type of memory we use to actively hold pieces of information, like the telephone number we are about to dial. In the study, 12 healthy people randomly received either a drink containing 27.5 grams of green tea extract, or the same drink without the green tea. Results from brain imaging and working memory tests suggested green tea improved both people’s performances in tests, and their brain connectivity between the frontal and parietal brain regions.

MOUTH HEALTH:

Drinking tea could be as good as mouthwash. The compounds found in black and green teas may limit the growth of bacteria that cause cavities, infections and gum disease. In one study, researchers found that people who rinsed their mouths with black tea for one minute, ten times daily, had less plaque buildup on their teeth than people who rinsed their mouths with water. However, if you decide to use tea as a mouthwash, citrus and fruity tea may not be the best options as their higher acidity may erode teeth.

REDUCING CANCER RISK:

Compounds found in green tea, called polyphenols, are believed to have some anti-cancer properties. One study that examined the tea-drinking habits of more than 500 people found that the risk of lung cancer was five times higher in those who did not drink green tea. Moreover, some studies suggest drinking green tea may help breast cancer patients fare better in the disease progression by limiting the growth of the tumor. It’s possible that polyphenols suppress proteins that help cancer cells grow.

IMPROVING MUSCLE STRENGTH:

Some studies have suggested that tea can improve muscular strength by reducing the age-related oxidative stress and inflammation that breaks down muscles and bones. In a study funded by the National Institutes of Health’s Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine, researchers gave 170 post-menopausal women either a placebo, tea or asked them to perform Tai Chi exercises. After six months, the women who drank the tea alone, performed Tai Chi alone or combined the two, all improved their muscle strength compared with those who took only the placebo.



Ask the Lord for His Strength to make wise and healthy lifestyle choices.

God’s Blessings,
Peggy Taylor, RN—Parish Nurse