**Benefits of Coffee** Reviewed by Taylor Wolfram, MS, RDN, LDN Published February 15, 2018

**Wake up and smell the … antioxidants?**

If you think your morning cup of joe provides nothing more to your body than a jolt of caffeine, you might be pleasantly surprised to learn that your daily cup (or three) provides some health benefits as well. Drinking moderate amounts of coffee (including decaf) has been linked to lower risk of cardiovascular disease, Type 2 diabetes, Parkinson's disease and some cancers.

And those antioxidants? Although researchers have yet to determine the exact mechanisms behind some of the disease-preventing effects, it is important to keep in mind that these compounds may be exerting other beneficial effects, such as acting as an anti-inflammatory. Coffee also contains small amounts of some nutrients, including potassium, niacin and magnesium.

Making your coffee a vehicle for fat-free milk is one way to ensure your daily calcium and vitamin D needs are met. If your diet does not include dairy, a fortified soy beverage is a calcium-rich alternative.

So how much java is too much? It's wise to stick to no more than 3 to 4 cups per day. Certain groups, such as people with hypertension and the elderly, may be more susceptible to the adverse effects of caffeine. Pregnant and breast-feeding women will want to limit intake to a maximum of 200 to 300 milligrams a day of caffeine (the amount in 2 to 3 cups of coffee). The American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists recommends that pregnant women cap caffeine consumption at 200 milligrams a day.