# Health Benefits of Tea

Hardly a week goes by without reading or hearing about the health benefits of tea. Most research has been done on green tea; but because all tea comes from the same plant, researchers are now conducting tests on the benefits of black tea as well.

Research indicates that naturally-occurring flavonoids found in tea have very effective antioxidant properties. Some laboratory research has found that tea has as much antioxidants, if not more, than many of your fruits and vegetables. The amount of flavonoids in tea seems to be the same whether it is decaffeinated or not. So it is the tea, not the caffeine that makes the difference.

Drinking tea is a natural and pleasant way to increase dietary exposure to antioxidants. Research continues to indicate that antioxidant-rich foods may play a role in reducing the risk of certain cancers, heart disease and stroke. It is believed that people who drink two or more cups of tea per day may have less chance of heart disease and stroke, lower cholesterol and recover from heart attacks quicker. Research also indicates that tea may protect against Parkinson’s disease, improve allergies, slow growth of tumours and protect bones.

So while you are sipping tea for pleasure, your body is benefiting as well. Best results come from brewing your own tea. Bottled teas can be loaded with sugar and instant teas have less antioxidants than brewed tea.

Tea is also rich in vitamin C, calcium, manganese, potassium, niacin, folic acid and small amounts of other vitamins and minerals.

The following list is a small sample of research findings.

## Cardiovascular

Studies have found that people who drink three or more cups of tea per day have an 11% lower risk rate of heart attacks. Not only are the risks for heart attacks lower, the Harvard Medical School found heavy tea drinkers are 44% less likely than non-drinkers to die from a heart attack and moderate tea drinkers have a 28% lower death rate. There is compelling evidence that suggests tea also improves the lining of your blood vessels.

## Cancer

There have been many exciting results from studies on tea and its effect on cancer. Mayo Clinic’s March 31, 2004 newsletter reported that a component in green tea actually helps kill leukaemia cells. Other studies have found that the flavonoids in tea reduce the risk of breast, lung, skin, mouth, digestive and urinary tract cancers.

## Cholesterol

Research indicates people who drink tea have lower cholesterol. Tea lowers the LDL (bad) cholesterol and raises HDL (good) cholesterol.

## Metabolism

According to one study, drinking three cups of oolong and green tea each day can raise your metabolism rate by 3-4%, which boosts fat burning.

## Bones

Researchers from National Cheng Kung University Hospital in Tainan, Taiwan, discovered that people who drink two cups of black, green or oolong tea per day for at least six years may have stronger bones. These tea drinkers had a hip-bone density of 2.3% higher, and for those consuming two cups of tea per day for ten years had a hip-bone density of 6.2% higher than non drinkers.

## Teeth

Tea is full of fluoride which makes for stronger tooth enamel. Drinking one cup of black or green tea may inhibit plaque and tooth decay and combat the bacteria that cause bad breath.

## Skin

Fitness magazine, June 2002 issue, states that the tannins in black tea act as a natural astringent helping to heal cuts and abrasions. Tea is also a great antidote for sunburn and helps reduce the sun damage to your skin.

## Infection and viruses

Lab studies have shown that tea inhibits viral infections, as well as throat and stomach infections. The antibacterial elements in tea also help fight food poisoning and diarrhoea.

## Links to relevant studies

The Healthcare Professionals area below presents in-depth, scientific evidence on tea and health research.

[Green tea cuts breast cancer risk](http://www.allheadlinenews.com/articles/7014447206)

[Green and black tea can reduce stroke risk](http://esciencenews.com/articles/2009/02/23/green.black.tea.can.reduce.stroke.risk)

[Green tea may combat arthritis](http://arthritis.about.com/od/preventionandriskfactors/a/greentea.htm)

[Can green tea help to keep blood vessels healthy?](http://tinyurl.com/d5bb5n)