

## STARBUCKS COFFEE – REGULAR

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“Death in a Jar”  
Newsletter 05/01/09

Dear Subscriber,

Starbucks coffee is going to be similar to all coffees given some small differences between different sources of the coffee bean. Coffee is usually consumed hot, but sometimes used cold, brew of a botanical plant seed in use as a cultural phenomenon since the mid 1400's but became very common in the early 1900's.

**Content:** From the label of the Starbucks coffee container – stainless steel can, is the following information (All labels have to list the main ingredients first): Water and caffeine.

One of the main concerns with the cultural habits of people is drinking coffee with sugar and milk, and oftentimes, pastries and desserts. The larger cultural problem of ingesting sugar in a liquid form, which enters the blood stream quickly and derails a natural insulin/glucagon hormonal balance is important for damaging health. Milk has its own issues in regard to food allergy potential which is much more common in society than most people realize. Still, analyzing coffee in this appraisal is based on pure black coffee alone.

Coffee is served in various containers small, medium, large and super-large. For comparison purposes we will analyze a 12 fluid ounces serving of coffee.

Caffeine content = A 12 ounce cup of Starbucks Tall Coffee contains **260 milligrams of caffeine** on average, as different coffee blends will have slightly different amounts of caffeine.

**Caffeine content.** Caffeine is a natural product produced in some plant products. Caffeine causes a spike in insulin in the body and is a stimulant. Caffeine is thought to reduce **bone density**, which is of particular concern for older men and especially women. Insulin is a hormonal player in the regulation of sugar metabolism in the body and is central to the disease state in the common illness of diabetes.

My main concern with caffeine as well as sugar is how they both create a “high” in the body's emotional nature but then that wears off dropping people into a feeling of low energy. Often people get on a roller coaster ride of continually eating sugar and consuming caffeine to be alert. This is addictive on a certain level and leads to disempowering of an individual. Caffeine alone or with sugar lead to energy changes in the body up and down. This makes it difficult to maintain evenness to one's moods. Self-discipline, willpower and focusing ability when the caffeine wears off – all are adversely affected. The deregulation of one's natural energy state is my chief concern with the use of coffee – it undermines responsible consciousness when used chronically and daily.

I consider coffee a damaging herb or at best, a greatly overused herb in modern culture. Anyone having difficulty sleeping should avoid caffeine or coffee use even if they consume the coffee in the morning. Caffeine interferes with the natural insulin response and in an age of increasing diabetes, one should avoid it.

Caffeine is a stimulant, which interferes with a person's natural mood cycles and energy. The main “feeling” problem after ingesting coffee is not the high or alertness one gets, but the depressing energy and attention that follow. Then, as many people do, they become addicted to the constant need for coffee to feel alert. I believe this has more detrimental effects than current medical testing has found. Emotionally, it is very damaging to be a coffee drinker. Anyone having depression should not take any mood elevators or depressants, and coffee is a big stimulator of impermanent duration. The key for health is responsible consciousness of which all stimulants or depressants fall into this detrimental category.

**Hypertension** – Caffeine increases the pulse rate of people, which is usually associated with a poorer condition of health. Caffeine also increases the blood pressure of people who are sensitive to raised blood pressure.

One of the first things I have to do when someone presents with high blood pressure is to get them to stop the use of any caffeine. Often, the key to good health is not what someone needs to start taking but what they need to STOP taking which is the definite case with caffeine and coffee use.

**Cardiac** – It is my experience that oftentimes, people who consume coffee for many years can start to have cardiac tachycardia or rhythm problems. Coffee has been related to increase heart attacks.

**Insomnia** –Even decaffeinated coffee still contains some caffeine. Whenever someone cannot sleep, they must stop coffee use.

There are some uses for caffeine in reality such as using it to keep awake in extreme situations. Many people will drink a caffeine product to stay awake while driving at night. I would prefer people pull over and truly rest or sleep, but that is not a decision many people will make.

**Addiction and Headaches.** – For all practical purposes, coffee becomes addicting for many people both physically and emotionally. Such is the physical addictive property of coffee that many people who stop the consumption of coffee experience one or two weeks of headache withdrawal symptoms. Caffeine is obviously playing a hormonal role in people who consume it regularly. People’s natural alertness and wake-up patterns can become quite disturbed after consuming coffee for a long time. Caffeine is wrongly used as an energy builder for those who have consumed coffee for a long time.

**GERD, Gastritis, esophageal reflux.** Anyone experiencing reflux or stomach irritation of any kind, nausea, etc. should stop all coffee use. Due to acidity, caffeine or other compounds, coffee can irritate any GI issue involving the upper GI tract. Any sphincter problems from reflux to erectile dysfunction, people should stop coffee use in my opinion.

**Drug effects.** People not used to consuming caffeine or coffee, once drinking coffee or consuming any caffeine, often will get an immediate bowel movement, showing the immediate drug effect of the product. Caffeine seems to inhibit smooth muscle action while stimulating cardiac muscle.

Coffee interferes with DNA synthesis and DNA repair according to studies. This is important because much of life and resultant illness is related to DNA repair or the lack thereof. Coffee increases insulin resistance in diabetes, increases homocysteine levels, which relate to cardiac problems and reduces magnesium absorption, which is a vital mineral. Coffee also increases stress response hormones. Coffee and caffeine can negatively affect blood glucose through directly raising serum glucose and subsequent hypoglycemia.

**Tannins** are a class of chemicals found in coffee, which are still being investigated. Tannins tend to bind with proteins, starches and minerals. Tanners use the strong protein binding ability of tannins to produce leather from animal hides. Tannins have a dehydrating effect in this manner.

**Acidity.** Coffee has a variable acidity of around 4.7, which is on the acidic side of acid/alkaline balance. It is generally considered healthier to eat or ingest food on the alkaline side of the acid/alkaline scale of food health.

**Beneficial effects of coffee.** Like all herbs, scientific studies are greatly lacking on them, partially due to the difficulty in testing multi-chemical herbal products, which all herbs inherently are. Some studies and people believe coffee may help erectile dysfunction. Some reports of improving headaches have been reported, but I believe this may be due to those people already addicted to caffeine use and those people get headaches when they reduce their coffee intake and then “fix” their headaches when they retake caffeine. Other reports have been made that coffee helps people with diabetes, reduces colon cancer and prevents dental cavities.

**Coffee enemas** are recommended by some alternative therapists for detoxifying the liver. I personally don’t use this therapy, but it is well-known among alternative healthcare providers and is part of the Gerson anti-cancer protocol.

**Comparable Good products:** Comparable good products that could be substituted for coffee would be the occasional use of herbal teas that do not contain caffeine. Also decaffeinated coffees are available which greatly improve upon the caffeine levels, (keep in mind that decaffeinated coffee still contains *some* caffeine and that the process of decaffeinating coffee adds other undesirable chemicals). A potential similar problem with the social activity of drinking coffee is the social use of tea where people may tend to eat other sweets and use dairy products along with this type of beverage.

Starbucks along with Dunkin Donuts and McDonalds are major providers of coffee to the public in retail environments. Maxwell House and Folgers are the major companies supplying coffee to grocery stores for the American consumer. Howard Shultz took over the original Starbucks in 1987. It now has more than 3,300 stores in over 18 countries. Coffee beans are produced in third world countries where coffee is purchased at inexpensive labor prices. This makes coffee an ideal financial product since it is then sold in affluent civilized countries for great profit.

I consider all coffee to be a detrimental product for the public in the amounts and frequency that they are consumed today - due primarily to the destructive effect caffeine has on mind and mood stability. Without stability of mind and mood, people become ill from the inside out. **Coffee and its caffeine, is one of the most addicting over-the-counter products for sale in restaurants across the United States. Entire restaurant chains are now devoted to marketing this overused product.**

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To your health!

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**The opinion expressed is that of Dr. Mark Laursen, M.D.**