



Finn Fitness & Wellness

Lose weight, increase energy, and achieve health and fitness for the rest of your life.



THREE REASONS TO LIMIT YOUR COFFEE INTAKE

At Finn Fitness our philosophy regarding sound nutrition and a healthy life style is that there is no “good” or “bad.” There are for each of us, however, appropriate amounts of particular foods, as well as physical activities, as we can learn from Paul Check and his *80/20 rule*. According to Check’s 80/20 rule, 80% of the time we should live our lives in a very healthy manner, eating highly nutritional food that gives our bodies the building blocks to stay healthy, and exercising in appropriate amounts to reach or maintain our individual goals. The other 20% of the time, we oftentimes eat, or do things that are not necessarily ideal for our health. Typically the average person eats three meals per day for a total of 21 meals per week. Therefore, 20% of 21 meals equal four meals per week when we can indulge a few little things that may not be ideal for our health.

In North America, it is estimated that 90% of adults consume caffeine in some form on a daily basis. For many of us this oftentimes includes coffee or other caffeinated. Caffeine is probably the most widely consumed, unregulated psychoactive substance worldwide, and the most popular beverages containing caffeine include coffee, tea, soft drinks, and energy drinks. In humans, caffeine acts as stimulant, temporarily warding off drowsiness, and restoring alertness, factors favored especially by athletes as caffeine can temporarily enhance their performance. In the 1980s and 1990s, caffeine was banned from the Olympic Games. However, as caffeine is now to be found in many food and drinks makes it impossible to outlaw. Therefore, in 2004 the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) removed it from its list of prohibited substances, but plans to continue to monitor caffeine in athletes in order to detect any misuse.

Now let's take a look at why we should specifically limit coffee from our daily routine, even if it is included in the 20%!

Reason Number One

The first reason we should limit our intake of coffee, is that it causes our bodies to use stored energy reserves as if our body is under stress. Coffee, many types of soda, chocolate, and even decaffeinated coffee, all have some level of caffeine in them. Every time we ingest caffeine, our bodies will access stored reserve energy to increase speed of function. The body will create more adrenaline and cortisol hormones, as well as raise the blood sugar levels in the bloodstream. This is the same response our bodies have to stress.

When we ingest caffeine on a regular basis, or, even worse, continue to increase the amount we ingest, over time we could possibly deplete the stored energy reserves of our body to a dangerously low level. This can lead to chronic fatigue, excess weight gain, and other symptoms of poor health.

Reason Number Two

Caffeine is a stimulant, which is the second reason we should limit our intake of coffee. When we drink coffee or soda, or ingest other things with caffeine in them, our body starts to work faster than what it was intended to do, which increases the wear and tear on all of the soft tissues of the human body. If one were to always drive their car revving the engine really high into the red zone, the increase in friction, and wear and tear on the engine would shorten the life span of the engine in their car. In much the same way when we ingest caffeine, forcing the body to run faster on a regular basis than it should, more damage is done, requiring more rest and additional good nutrition to repair the damage. Our body does have the ability of healing itself if given enough rest, and the appropriate nutrients to do so, but if we are not getting enough rest, nor providing the appropriate nutrition to recuperate from this damage, the result could be a reduction in performance, and a shorter lifespan for these soft tissues.

Reason Number Three

The third reason to limit coffee intake is due to the havoc coffee can play with the digestive system. The acids in the caffeine in coffee serve as a diuretic, requiring more water to eliminate these acids and toxins from our bodies. Marathon runners often have a cup of black coffee the morning of a race in order to force the body to empty the bowels. This will ensure the runner will be as light as possible that day, and not need a "pit stop" along the route of the marathon. The stress created from the drinking of coffee slows down, and often stops the movement in our digestive system. Should this occur frequently enough, it may become difficult to start the movement in the digestive system once again, resulting in poor digestion of food, increased risk of bacteria overgrowth and parasite infection, and a weakened immune system. All of the abdominal and other core muscles of the body are directly linked to the function of our digestive system. If our digestive system is not functioning properly, the important core muscles that stabilize and maintain the health of our spine could be compromised. The human body is more than 65% water, and every function of the human body requires water. The increase in water the body needs to eliminate the toxins introduced into our system through coffee can lead to dehydration. If at any time we are lacking sufficient water, any system, including the function of our brain, can be at a disadvantage. For more information about adequate water intake see my article *Eight Strategies to a Better Body* on our website.

These are just a few of the reasons why it is important that we limit the amount of coffee, and other foods or beverages containing high levels of acid or toxins such as caffeine, that create more stress and wear and tear on our bodies. This stress often leads to the breakdown of soft tissues in the muscles or joints, which can result in pain. It can also lead to chronic fatigue, type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, and many other hormonal or soft tissue dysfunctions. You can learn more about the 80/20 rule and a healthier lifestyle in the Finn Fitness & Wellness *Online Weight Loss Program*.

Just remember: 80% of the time we need to focus on good nutrition and exercise to build health into our bodies in order to compensate for the 20% of the time that we may be detracting from the health of our bodies.

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