Can drinking coffee be healthy? Beliefs and behaviours across Europe

Coffee plays a major role in the daily life of Europeans. The three most popular places to drink coffee are:

Europeans care about their diet:

Which European countries described their lifestyle as either ‘fairly’ or ‘very’ healthy?

Coffee and health: can we tell fact from fiction?

More than half of Europeans are concerned as to whether coffee is good or bad for their health:

Coffee and type 2 diabetes

Research suggests that drinking 3-5 cups of coffee per day may reduce the approximate 25% known risk of developing type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease, or reduce in people with diabetes risk.

Coffee and cognitive decline e.g. Alzheimer’s and Parkinson’s disease

Research suggests that regular, long-term moderate coffee consumption may help to reduce the probability of developing Alzheimer’s by up to 40% in individuals at high risk of developing Alzheimer’s disease.

Coffee and mental performance

The European Food Safety Authority concluded that a 5mg serving of caffeine (the amount found in approx. one regular cup of coffee) can increase attention and alertness.

Coffee and cardiovascular (heart) disease risk

The three meta-analyses suggest an association between 3-5 cups of coffee per day and a reduced risk of developing cardiovascular disease. Two meta-analyses suggest an association between coffee consumption and cardiovascular disease risk, proposing a ‘U-shaped’ pattern between coffee consumption and cardiovascular disease risk.

Coffee and parkinson’s disease

Caffeine consumption is also associated with a reduced risk of developing Parkinson’s disease.

Coffee and type 2 diabetes

Moderate consumption of coffee at 3-5 cups per day has been associated with a range of desirable physiological effects and fits within a healthy diet and active lifestyle. Pregnant and breastfeeding women are advised by EFSA to consume no more than 200mg of caffeine, or approx. 2 cups of coffee per day.

So, can coffee be consumed as part of a healthy diet?

References

3. Zhang Y. et al. (2011) Coffee consumption and the incidence of type 2 diabetes in men and women with statistical risk to them:
5. Palacios N. et al. (2012) Caffeine and Risk of Parkinson’s Disease in a Large Cohort of Men and Women. Movement Disorders, 1;27(10):1276-82
7. Coffee and Health website
8. Did you know?

Further information can be found on the Coffee and Health website.