The Impact of Caffeine on the Brain

Many of us love using a good hit of caffeine to get through our day, whether from our daily cup of coffee, afternoon tea, or some other source. But can daily use of the substance have an impact on your brain? This National Caffeine Awareness Month, we have decided to take a closer look at how caffeine affects the brain.

# **How Much Caffeine is Safe?**

According to the [Food and Drug Administration (FDA),](https://www.fda.gov/consumers/consumer-updates/spilling-beans-how-much-caffeine-too-much) a safe amount of caffeine for a healthy adult should not exceed approximately 400 milligrams (about 4 cups of coffee) per day. However, those who are pregnant, trying to become pregnant, currently breastfeeding, experiencing caffeine sensitivities, taking medication, or experiencing a health condition should speak to their doctor to determine the safest amount of caffeine for them. The best way to know how much caffeine is safe for you is to speak to your doctor, as we all have different health needs, caffeine sensitivity, and lifestyles.

# **Can Caffeine Be Beneficial to the Brain?**

The impacts of caffeine on the brain aren’t all bad. As a matter of fact, research has found that moderate consumption of the substance may even have some great benefits for your brain and body! Studies have found that [caffeine](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/26677204/) can increase alertness in the brain, encourage overall wellbeing, improve concentration, boost one’s mood, and decrease symptoms of depression.

# **The Downsides of Caffeine**

## **Caffeine and Sleep**

Caffeine is known as a substance that provides a boost of energy. Because of this, some sensitive individuals or those consuming coffee late in the day may find that their sleep becomes disturbed by the substance. Sleep plays an essential role in cognitive functioning and mental health.

When one does not get enough sleep, they may experience a wide range of mental and cognitive health struggles, such as:

* An increased risk for mental health disorders like [depression, anxiety, and bipolar disorder](https://www.sleepfoundation.org/sleep-deprivation)
* Brain fog
* Moodiness and low mood
* Irritability
* Increased stress

## **Caffeine and Anxiety**

One of the most well-known downsides of caffeine is that it can potentially increase anxiety symptoms. Studies have suggested that excessive caffeine use can put one at risk of [panic attacks and caffeine-induced anxiety](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/34871964/). Those who already experience a panic disorder have been found to be at a higher risk of these effects.

# **Caffeine Addictions**

As with any substance, those who use caffeine are at risk of developing a caffeine dependency. This is because of the chemical changes within the brain caused by the substance. The more one uses caffeine, the less effective it will become. This could make the user feel as though they need to continue increasing their caffeine intake, ultimately leading to a caffeine use disorder.

# **We Are Here for You**

If you have found yourself dependent on caffeine, experiencing the symptoms of an anxiety disorder, or feeling as though your mental health is struggling, we are here for you. Our educated and compassionate counselors will work with you to determine why you are feeling off, find a treatment that helps you feel better, and develop healthy coping mechanisms to encourage optimal mental health. [Contact](http://michiganpsychologicalcare.com/contact.php) us today.

**References**

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/26677204/>

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