

## Caffeine content <sup>[1]</sup>

Dear Alice,

Obscure questions about caffeine: relative to each other, how much caffeine is there in:

- An average chocolate bar,
- An average cup of coffee, and
- An average soda pop (twelve ounces)?

Thanks!

### **Answer**

Dear Reader,

Although they have different amounts of caffeine, all of these products could provide a bit of an energy boost. Caffeine is a natural substance that exists in over 60 plant species worldwide, including coffee and cocoa beans, tea leaves, and kola nuts. A potent stimulant, caffeine is a part of many people's daily routine worldwide. The items you've mentioned specifically do vary quite a bit in their caffeine content, but all do contain the substance in some amount. And, your question is a good one, since knowing how much is in the food or beverage you're about to consume can help you decide whether it's a healthful addition to your diet.

Research has indicated that for most people, consuming up to 400 milligrams (mg) per day is low-risk. With that said, here's a list of products and how much caffeine each contains:

- Coffee (1 cup or 8 ounces (oz.), brewed, dripped, percolated): 95 to 165 mg
- Espresso, (1 oz.): 47 to 64 mg
- Green tea (8 oz.): 25 to 29 mg
- Soda (12 oz., best to check each brand with manufacturer): 24 to 46 mg
- Milk chocolate (1.55 oz. bar): 11 mg
- Dark chocolate (1.45 oz. bar): 30 mg
- Energy drinks (8 oz.): 27 to 164 mg
- Energy shots (1 oz.): 40 to 100 mg

List adapted from [Mayo Clinic](#) [2] and [March of Dimes](#) [3].

While many enjoy this quick-picker-upper, ingesting caffeine may not be a healthy choice for some people and under certain circumstances. For example, dependence on caffeine is possible and, as with any substance, tolerance can develop. In the event that a person chooses to cut back, they may experience withdrawal symptoms including headache, fatigue, or drowsiness. Others who don't frequently consume caffeine may find that small amounts make them jittery and that it leads to difficulties with sleep. Individuals with certain medical conditions and pregnant people may consider restricting or eliminating caffeine and may address any concerns with their health care provider. It's also worth noting that [combining highly caffeinated beverages \(energy drinks\) with other substances, such as alcohol](#), [4] can pose risks to your health.

If you're keen on caffeine helping you put some pep in your step, it's good to know that manufacturers of caffeinated products may only list the presence of the substance and not necessarily the amount. This can make shopping a challenge if you're trying to keep your consumption of it in check. If you have questions about specific brands, you can often check the product website for more detail.

Enjoy (in moderation)!

Alice!

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