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Do Tea Drinkers Live Longer?

By Nicholas Bakalar

2-3 minutes

Each one-cup increase in daily tea consumption was tied to a 4 percent decrease of dying from cardiovascular disease.





Credit...Tony Cenicola/The New York Times

Drinking tea may lower your risk of cardiovascular disease.

Researchers combined data from 39 observational studies involving more than 1.8 million men and women who drank black or green tea. The [review of studies is in *Advances in Nutrition*](#).

They found that each one-cup increase in daily tea consumption was associated with an average 2 percent decrease in any cardiovascular event, a 4 percent decrease in death from cardiovascular disease, a 4 percent lower risk of stroke and a 1.5 percent lower risk of death from any cause. The effects were strongest in older populations.

Tea contains large quantities of flavonoids, plant pigments that have been shown in animal and human studies to moderate oxidative and inflammatory stress and improve the function of blood vessels. These effects may contribute to cardiovascular health.

According to the senior author, Taylor C. Wallace, the principal consultant of the Think Healthy Group, a research firm, and an adjunct professor at George Mason University, tea drinkers consume, on average, about 20 times more flavonoids than those who don't drink tea.

The lead author, Mei Chung, an associate professor of public health at Tufts University School of Medicine, cautioned that the studies

reviewed here are observational, and that it is difficult in such studies to tease out the specific effect of tea. “It’s possible that tea drinkers try to follow a healthy lifestyle in other respects,” she said.

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