

Why and How to Stop Drinking Coffee

Why should I stop drinking coffee?

In addition to caffeine, which is a drug, there are many toxins in the coffee itself which prevent the body from absorbing nutrients and eliminating wastes in an optimal manner. This can affect the body in several ways.

- **Acid Imbalance:** There are over 208 different acids in coffee that can contribute to indigestion and the many health conditions associated with over-acidic conditions such as arthritic and rheumatic illnesses.
- **Vitamin and Mineral Depletion:** Coffee inhibits the absorption of some nutrients, and causes the excess urinary excretion of calcium, magnesium, potassium, iron, and trace minerals. Drinking coffee daily can also reduce your B vitamin stores, which could enhance feelings of stress and fatigue.
- **Irritation to Bladder and Urinary Tract:** Coffee is an irritant to the urinary tract and bladder, and is also a diuretic, which can aggravate conditions associated with frequent urination.
- **Counteracts Homeopathic Remedies:** Coffee (regular or decaf) can also antidote your homeopathic remedy (refer to the section below for more information).

If eliminating coffee feels impossible to you, you should consider switching to decaffeinated organic coffee at the very least. If you drink decaf and organic coffee, it will lessen your exposure to caffeine and toxic pesticide residue. The best course of action, however, is to stop drinking coffee.

How does coffee affect my homeopathic remedy?

Coffee can cancel your homeopathic remedy. This includes regular *and* decaf coffee.

In some cases coffee can antidote your remedy immediately, even if it's just half a cup of decaffeinated coffee. In other cases, coffee can antidote your remedy slowly over time; every time you have a cup the remedy's effectiveness may decrease by 5%, for example. In very rare cases, coffee may not antidote a person's remedy. Since homeopathy is one of the most important therapies we offer our patients, we sincerely urge you to at least seriously consider eliminating coffee from your diet.

What can I drink in place of coffee?

There are several popular coffee alternatives available through our pharmacy or at local stores and supermarkets.

- **Dandy Blend:** This instant powdered beverage tastes like instant coffee, but is made from plants that are good for your body (*available through our pharmacy*).
- **Teccino:** This is brewed like coffee, and has a similar aroma and flavor to brewed coffee. Teccino comes in a variety of flavors. You can obtain Teccino from health food stores, including the health food section at Fred Meyer.
- **Pero and Inka:**
There are many different products made from roasted barley that can be used as coffee substitutes: Pero and Inka are two of them. These come in different containers and can be purchased from Fred Meyer or health food stores. Mix 1 part Inka to 2 parts Pero for improved flavor (some people prefer the taste of Pero to Inka, but the Inka helps to fill out the flavor of the drink).

Things to consider adding to your beverage for flavor and for effect:

- 1) 1/4 tsp cocoa to 8 oz. of the Inka and Pero - and now you have a mocha!
- 2) "Organic Roasted Dandelion Root" tea for its health effects as well as its coffee-like flavor.
- 3) A small amount of agave nectar or honey as a sweetener.
- 4) Black tea for the caffeine.

You can even take caffeine pills if you suffer from fatigue. A common brand name is Vivarin which you can obtain from drug stores. Take one Vivarin pill for each cup of coffee that you will NOT be drinking.

What will happen when I stop drinking coffee?

There is a period of adjustment for a few weeks, sometimes longer, when you stop drinking coffee. This is when the body is missing caffeine, which is literally an addictive drug. When you stop coffee, your body can go through withdrawal. Not everyone develops withdrawal symptoms; in rare cases, people are able to quit caffeine suddenly without any unpleasant side effects. However, it is much more common to experience at least some manifestations of withdrawal, and even serious symptoms can happen when you stop drinking coffee. The symptoms of caffeine withdrawal could be mental, emotional, or physical.

- **Mental symptoms** can include a decrease in clarity of thought, especially in the morning. You may feel sleepy and dysfunctional when you wake up, which is one reason people often become dependent on coffee.
- On an **emotional level**, people can get frustrated or angry, and they might feel like they don't have any joy in their life. Coffee temporarily sharpens the mind and elevates mood, but this effect is only temporary. Considering all the detrimental effects that coffee has on the organs of the body, and the fact that it antidotes homeopathic remedies, it is more of a problem than a solution.
- **Physically**, people can feel exhausted and experience a severe headache.

We want to encourage you to not give up the first week or two because of the symptoms of caffeine withdrawal. There are techniques outlined below to manage or avoid these symptoms. If you have any concerns, please feel free to come see us earlier than your regular appointment. You can also call the office with any questions or contact your doctor directly by email (brief emails are welcome).

How can I avoid symptoms of caffeine withdrawal when I stop drinking coffee?

Since caffeine itself (as opposed to coffee) does not antidote your homeopathic remedy, you should not stop caffeine suddenly when you stop drinking coffee. We encourage you to use other sources of caffeine to avoid the symptoms of caffeine withdrawal. If you are drinking one cup of coffee a day, consider replacing it with two cups of organic black or green tea. If you are drinking several cups of coffee a day, maybe you should consider weaning yourself off of it slowly. We encourage you to gradually wean off of it over the period of a month to give yourself some time.

We recommend the following ways to include caffeine in your diet without coffee:

- **Organic Teas**, green and/or black
- Natural sports drinks such as **VISO**. Look for their bottle labeled "VIGOR" (and please avoid their diet versions as they have artificial sweeteners).

What if I miss going to coffee shops or other aspects of the coffee drinking ritual?

If you are a Starbucks fan or enjoy going to coffee shops, you could get a Soy Chai drink instead of coffee. This drink does not contain any dairy or coffee. It does have caffeine, but caffeine itself does not antidote your homeopathic remedy. They also have a variety of teas, and may make a tea latte.

The coffee alternatives listed above can provide aspects of the coffee drinking ritual because they smell and look like coffee. Even if you are willing to just drink green tea, black tea, and caffeine drinks, we also encourage you to drink coffee alternative drinks once in a while so that you won't feel deprived of the coffee drinking ritual. If you don't consider this aspect you may, after a few months and on a subconscious level, feel very deprived. It's important that you have something that smells and tastes like coffee to fulfill this need. If you would like your beverage to also feel like coffee, then you could add black tea to it for the caffeine effect.

For how long do I avoid coffee?

You should avoid drinking coffee for as long as you have health issues and are under homeopathic care, since it may antidote your homeopathic remedy. Once you reach a balanced state of health and you feel well, then you will be able to have coffee again. We don't recommend having coffee every day, but you should be able to have coffee a few times a month and not suffer any consequences once you reach this level of health.