

21 January 2016

## CAFFEINE: THE FACTS

### What is caffeine?

Caffeine occurs naturally in coffee beans, tea leaves, kola nuts, cocoa beans and many other plants. Caffeine can also be man-made. Many common foods and beverages such as coffee, tea and chocolate contain caffeine. Caffeine is also added to some beverages, providing a slightly bitter taste that contributes to the flavour profile, or to provide a physiological effect, such as improving concentration.

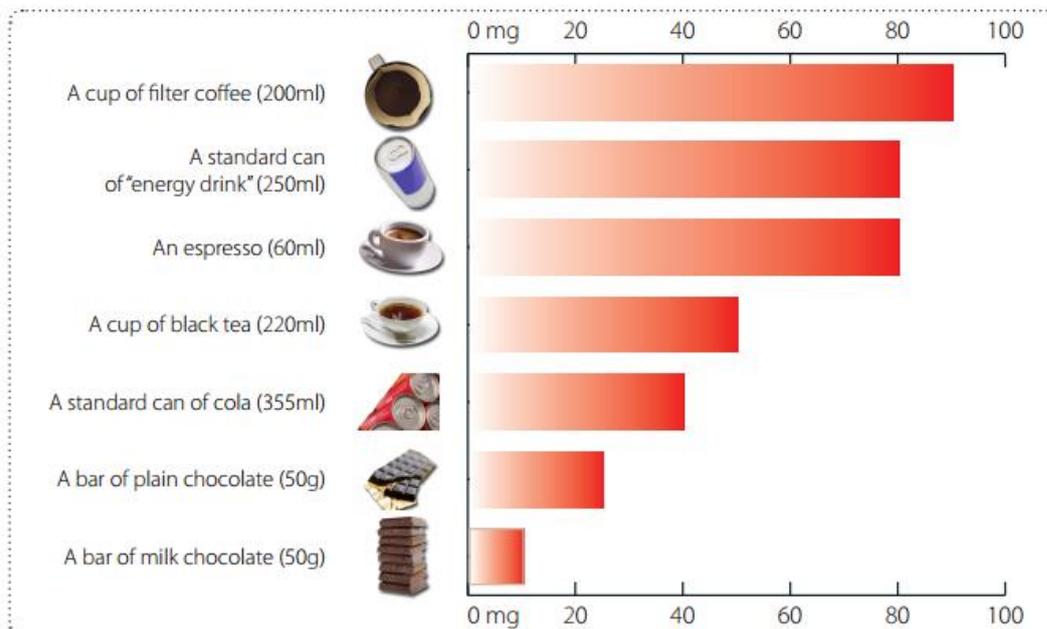
### Which beverages contain added caffeine, and how much do they contain?

In beverages, caffeine can either be added as an ingredient or, at lower levels, as a flavouring.

- Energy drinks typically contain 80 mg of caffeine per 250 ml can which is about the same as in an espresso coffee.
- Colas, on the other hand, typically contain lower levels of caffeine, around 40 mg per 355 ml portion.

### How much caffeine is in foods and beverages?

For easy comparison, here is a table from EFSA showing the typical caffeine content of various foods and drinks:



Source: EFSA, Factsheet on Caffeine, 2015,

[http://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/corporate\\_publications/files/efsaexplainscaffeine150527.pdf](http://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/corporate_publications/files/efsaexplainscaffeine150527.pdf)

## What are the main sources of caffeine?

In its 2015 scientific opinion on the safety of caffeine<sup>1</sup>, the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) found that the contribution to total caffeine intake from energy drinks is negligible in children and low in adolescents. By far, most caffeine consumption - for people of all ages - comes from other sources, namely coffee, tea, chocolate and other beverages. Energy drinks are still a niche category of beverages, representing only 1% of the total non-alcoholic beverages market<sup>2</sup>.

## Is caffeine safe?

Caffeine is one of the world's most thoroughly tested ingredients. It is considered safe by food authorities around the globe and enjoyed in foods and beverages by millions of people every day for centuries.

Daily caffeine intakes from all sources up to 400 mg do not raise safety concerns in the general population of healthy adults and are not associated with adverse health effects (200 mg for pregnant / breast-feeding women). Based on the caffeine values in the chart on page 1, this is equivalent to 5 energy drinks (250 ml), 10 colas (355 ml) or 4-5 cups of filter coffee (200 ml).

## How is caffeine regulated?

So that consumers can make informed purchases, EU law (Food Information Regulation 1169/2011) requires all drinks containing over 150 mg/l of caffeine to display '*High caffeine content. Not recommended for children or pregnant or breast-feeding women*' in the same field of vision as the name of the beverage, followed by a reference to the caffeine content expressed in mg per 100 ml.

*Ends*

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<sup>1</sup> EFSA NDA Panel (EFSA Panel on Dietetic Products, Nutrition and Allergies), 2015. Scientific Opinion on the safety of caffeine. EFSA Journal 2015;13(5):4102, 120 pp.

<sup>2</sup> Canadean Global Beverage Forecasts, 2015.