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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 25 – 32 mg per 250 ml portion.

How much caffeine is in foods and beverages?
For easy comparison, here is a table showing the typical caffeine content for standard servings of various foods and drinks:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Product</th>
<th>Typical caffeine content per serving</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coffeehouse Grande Caffe Latte (473ml)</td>
<td>150 mg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Filter coffee, 125ml cup</td>
<td>80 (60-135) mg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Energy drink, 250ml portion</td>
<td>80 mg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coffeehouse, espresso, 30ml cup</td>
<td>60 (35 – 100) mg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brewed tea, 250ml cup</td>
<td>63 mg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coffee ice cream, 227g bowl</td>
<td>48 mg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colas, 250ml portion</td>
<td>25-32 mg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solid dark chocolate, 28g portion</td>
<td>20 mg</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Individual company websites, International Food Information Council (IFIC)
http://www.foodinsight.org/Content/3147/Caffeine_v8-2.pdf

What are the main sources of caffeine?
Recent European consumption data show that 92 % of total caffeine for adults and 87 % of caffeine for adolescents come from other caffeine sources than energy drinks, namely coffee, tea and other
beverages. Energy drinks are still a niche category of beverages, representing only 1% of the total non-alcoholic beverages market.

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.

Moderate caffeine consumption for adults is considered to be 300-400 mg per day. Based on the caffeine values in the chart on page 1, this is equivalent to 3-4 energy drinks (250 ml), 7-12 colas (330 ml) or 3-4 cups of coffee (125 ml).

Moderate consumption of caffeine is not associated with adverse health effects.

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 in brackets and in accordance with Article 13(1) of this Regulation to the caffeine content expressed in mg per 100 ml.


Ends

\[1\] Gathering consumption data on specific consumer groups of energy drinks, NOMISMA-ARETE Consortium, 2013 - commissioned by EFSA