

# DRINK FOUR CUPS OF COFFEE A DAY?

An expert shares whether we should actually take heed of this new-found claim.

## THE EXPERT



**Nurullatifah Fauzan**, dietician at Columbia Asia Hospital, Seremban

In the first half of the year, researchers claimed that drinking three cups of coffee a day has some health benefits. A few months after, a study done by German researchers found that drinking four cups a day would not only help lower the risk of cardiovascular diseases, but also improve eyesight.

Nurullatifah Fauzan, a dietician at Columbia Asia Hospital, Seremban, expounds on both these views.

### Addressing the matter

Firstly, we need to look at the bigger picture, seeing as we are all unique and one size rarely fits all. Nurul cautions to “keep in mind that further research is still needed to evaluate the direct correlation (between coffee and its cardiovascular benefits). Also, several other factors such as the extra calories from syrup, sugar, and creamer consumed together with coffee can affect the overall health outcome.”

### Healthy habits

A healthy way of consuming coffee is to make conscious decisions about the food you’re pairing it with. “As an example, if you’re having a pastry with your cup of coffee, try to reduce the amount of calories in the coffee by adding low-fat milk instead of regular milk. Pass on the whipped cream, and sweeten it with an artificial sweetener or granulated sugar rather than flavoured syrup. This way, you can keep track of the amount of sugar consumed,” Nurul advises. She also points out that according to a small study, consuming caffeine six hours prior to bedtime has disruptive effects on sleep.

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THE MORE  
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ANTIOXIDANTS.

Nurullatifah Fauzan



### PLAYING IT SAFE

“Caffeine in coffee has various degrees of effect on each individual depending on the tolerance, amount, and type of coffee consumed,” Nurul explains.

1. The Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2015-2020 suggests healthy adults consume no more than 400mg of caffeine daily, across three to five cups filled up to 237ml.
2. Those who are pregnant or breastfeeding should consult their doctors first or opt for decaffeinated coffee, which has a very low content of caffeine.
3. The American Academy of Pediatrics advises to not include caffeinated beverages in children’s diets.
4. If you have a specific health condition, it’s best to consult your doctors on appropriate caffeine consumption.