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BOND, Tim

ANTIOXIDANTS

WEIGHT loss

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**Geographic Terms:**GREAT Britain**Abstract:**The article discusses the health benefits of tea. Also cited are the percentage of adult individuals who drink tea in Great Britain as of October 2016, the comment by Doctor Tim Bond of the Tea Advisory Panel (TAP) on the disease-fighting capabilities of tea, and some benefits of tea like good antioxidants, effective for weight loss, and good for achieving a calmer mind.**Full Text Word Count:**1316**ISSN:**1752-6310**Accession Number:**117543373**Section:**

HEALTH

**Time for tea****The humble cuppa is spilling over with health benefits. Here's what science has to say about the nation's favourite beverage****[From a delicate cup of Earl Grey to a strong, wake-me-up builder's, there's nothing quite like a good old cuppa, is there?](#)**

Tea is the most highly consumed beverage in the world after water and has been sipped by Brits for more than 350 years.

Today, a staggering 80 per cent of British adults drink tea and there is now more evidence than ever recognising the role of the beverage in a healthy diet. 'Drinking black, green, oolong and herbal infusions all tick a lot of boxes when it comes to our health -- from reducing diabetes, cardiovascular disease, stroke, arthritis and obesity risks, to protecting against cancer, as well as having oral health and hydration benefits,' says Dr Tim Bond of the Tea Advisory Panel (TAP). We decided to take a look at the ways tea can be more than just the nation's favourite drink

**[Drink tea for the antioxidants](#)**

Antioxidants -- the molecules that help prevent the damaging effects of oxidation on cells in the body -- play an important role in our diet. And while all teas contain respectable levels of antioxidants, some go the extra mile.

'The primary health-boosting quality of green tea is undoubtedly its content of antioxidants,' says Cassandra Barns, a nutritionist and health writer. 'These include a type of flavonol called catechins, of which the most abundant is epigallocatechin gallate (EGCG). Catechins have been found to have anti-inflammatory activity, anti-cancer and anti-ageing properties, among others.' Looking for a real antioxidant hit? Matcha comes out on top with the content of EGCG available more than 100 times greater than that found in a standard green tea.

**[Drink tea to reduce your risk of disease](#)**

A mug of tea may look fairly unassuming, but growing research suggests it can actually help tackle some of the biggest health dilemmas we face today.

'Data pooled from a recent "super study" [by the Department of Neurosurgery, Shanghai Seventh People's Hospital, China] found that regular tea consumption [three cups of black tea daily] reduces the risk of coronary heart disease by 27 per cent, and the risk of suffering a stroke by 21 per cent,' Dr Bond explains. Further research by the European Prospective Investigation into Cancer and Nutrition (EPIC) found that drinking three cups of tea, three cups of coffee or a combination of both daily reduced the risk of type 2 diabetes by approximately 42 per cent. Paula Grainger and Karen Sullivan, authors of recipe book *Infuse*:

*Teas to Cleanse, Nourish and Heal* maintain that the use of cinnamon in tea could help stave off the disease, too: 'Recent research suggests that cinnamon can lower blood sugar levels and help prevent type 2 diabetes.'

But it doesn't stop there. Dr Stephen Hsu, a cell biologist in the Medical College of Georgia Department of Oral Biology, has determined that compounds in green tea called polyphenols help eliminate free radicals (which can cause cancer by altering DNA) while safeguarding healthy cells.

### [Drink tea for weight loss](#)

From weight maintenance to weight loss, black, white and green tea have all been hailed as heroes when it comes to our waistline. Researchers from Germany, for example, labelled white tea a 'natural source of slimming substances' after it was found that an extract of the tea effectively inhibits generation of new human fat cells (adipocytes) and stimulates fat mobilisation from mature cells. Green tea has also been found to be effective. 'Green tea may support weight loss in several ways: increasing thermogenesis (calorie burning), increasing fat oxidation (burning of fat for energy), reducing fat absorption, and even reducing appetite!' says Cassandra. Black tea, too, was found to significantly inhibit weight gain by an average of 0.64kg and reduce waist circumference by 1.88cm, according to the Department of Nutrition at the University of Oslo.

### [Drink tea to protect your bones](#)

Did you know you can support bone health with a cuppa? 'It's been found that EGCG can decrease our numbers of the cells that break down bone -- and increase the numbers and activity of the cells that build bone,' explains Cassandra. And it's not just green tea that gives our bones some TLC.

According to Dr Bond, black tea can also reduce the risk of osteoporotic fracture, particularly in women.

'In an Australian study, the consumption of three or more cups of black tea daily was associated with a 30 per cent reduced risk of osteoporotic fracture,' he explains. How does the humble black tea do it? 'It's thought that the flavonoids found in tea may have contributed to these benefits,' adds Dr Bond.

### [Drink tea for oral health](#)

High levels of fluoride make tea a brilliant way to maintain good oral health. 'Tea is a natural source of fluoride, as the tea plant absorbs fluoride present in the soil of tea-producing countries,' explains Professor Robin Seymour, a periodontologist and an advisor to TAP.

A recent study published in *Nutrition Bulletin* reviewed fluoride levels in 49 different tea bags and found that levels ranged from 0.72-1.68mg per serving -- a quarter to a half of the European recommended daily allowance. Why the difference? 'The level of fluoride in tea leaves will depend on where the tea is grown, with countries such as Kenya being particularly good for fluoride-rich soils,' Professor Seymour adds.

Green tea has also been recognised as having potent antibacterial activity against several of the bacteria that cause gum disease and tooth decay -- so much so that it can even be used as mouthwash. What's more, 'several studies have found that green tea can help reduce bad breath thanks to its natural disinfectant and deodorant activities,' adds Cassandra.

### [Drink tea for digestive woes](#)

When it comes to digestive issues, herbal tea can help restore balance. 'Almost all herbs work to detoxify the body to some extent, improving and soothing digestion, and ridding your organs of toxins to ensure they work at optimal level,' explain Paula and Karen. 'When you're feeling sluggish, tired and run down, a cup of healing herbal tea may be all it takes to get you going again.' Peppermint, for example, has now been proven to be an effective pain reliever for IBS. Fennel can help relieve bloating; ginger is extremely effective for nausea, indigestion and motion sickness; while rooibos has been praised for improving digestion. Suffering from constipation? 'Rhubarb root and yellow dock gently stimulate movement, while cramp bark, chamomile and aromatic spices prevent pain,' say Paula and Karen.

### [Drink tea for a calmer mind](#)

Feeling stressed? Can't focus? Worried about your memory? Tea is on hand! 'The primary reason that tea is a better choice when we're stressed is thanks to its content of a natural substance called L-theanine, which is virtually unique to the tea plant,' Cassandra explains. 'L-theanine has been found to have a relaxing effect on the mind, reduce anxiety, and help with concentration. It's thought to do this by increasing alpha waves in the brain, which are associated with being 'calm but alert' -- i.e increasing relaxation without causing drowsiness.' (Matcha is thought to be particularly high in L-theanine.) Studies have also suggested that catechins in green tea can reach the brain and help protect the neurons (nerve cells), as well as reducing decline in brain function. 'It's been reported that the catechins in green tea can help prevent the build-up of both amyloid plaques and phosphorylated tau proteins -- processes that occur in people with Alzheimer's disease, and lead to a decline in memory and cognitive function,' Cassandra says. Moreover, herbal tea is wonderful for calming the mind. 'Many herbs can have a dramatic effect on emotional health, easing anxiety, depression, sleep problems, mood swings and symptoms of stress,' say Paula and Karen.

PHOTO (COLOR)

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