



# nutrinews

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## GROUP MEETINGS

### Healthy Options on Campus

*Nutrition Info and Demonstration Table*

**when:** Every other Wednesday at Noon

**where:** Student Union food areas

*location will vary, watch for us!*

### Changes for Life

*healthy weight education and support group*

**when:** every Tuesday at Noon

**where:** Campus Health (3rd Flr. East Conf. Rm)

**cost:** \$5 per meeting (or \$50 per semester)

## Q: Should I be worried about how much caffeine I drink?

**A:** Caffeine is a mild central nervous system stimulant found in coffee beans, tea leaves, cocoa seeds, and guarana seeds. In moderation (about 300 mg/day) caffeine can increase your ability to focus and concentrate. In excess, however, caffeine can make you anxious, hyper, and unable to focus.

How much is “too much” is a very individual thing. You have to listen to your own body. If you have any of the symptoms below, reduce your caffeine intake to 200-300 mg/day, or try decaffeinated sodas, herbal teas, decaf tea and coffee (or go half and half). If you decide to cut out caffeine totally, take it slowly. Going cold turkey may result in withdrawal symptoms.

Caffeine’s effect on adults depends on several factors: how much is consumed (low dose < 80 mg/d, high dose > 500 mg/d), whether certain medications are taken, alcohol consumption, time of day consumed, and your unique sensitivity. There are positive and negative effects of caffeine, which may include:

- Increased alertness and reduction in fatigue
- Increased ability to concentrate, improved cognitive functioning
- Increased time to fatigue for athletic performance
- Tension, anxiety, panic attacks, hand tremors
- Wakefulness, insomnia, sleeplessness
- Irregular heartbeat, sweating
- Elevated blood pressure
- Dehydration due to frequent urination
- Diarrhea, stomach cramps.

It doesn’t take much to develop a dependency on caffeine. Just 200 mg per day is enough to provoke withdrawal symptoms (e.g., headache, fatigue) if caffeine is skipped for as little as half a day. You get about this much in four cans of caffeinated soda, 4 cups of tea, or a 12 oz cup regular coffee (although a Starbucks Tall Regular is ~375 mg!).

Studies linking caffeine with elevated cholesterol, fibrocystic breast disease, irregular heartbeats, osteoporosis, and some cancers have found no conclusive links. However, coffee or sodas, even those with no caffeine, tend to stimulate stomach acids that may trigger heartburn and ulcers in some people.

For more information about caffeine and amounts in popular beverages, go to the Campus Health website under On-line library, click on General Nutrition and then on Caffeine.

Questions? email: [wildcatnutrition@yahoo.com](mailto:wildcatnutrition@yahoo.com)