

53.7%*
of respondents
consume
caffeine

* of 281 surveyed

WHY CAFFEINE?

Junior Erika Moskewicz, who is diagnosed with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, utilizes caffeine to help her focus.

"My parents [didn't] want to start me on medication right away, so they decided on tea," Moskewicz said. "Caffeine was a middle ground between a more serious stimulant and doing nothing."

Another appealing aspect is the experience of drinking caffeinated beverages.

"[During high school], if I had to stay up late to finish a paper, I would use caffeine to help keep me up," said biology teacher Cathryn Kliegel. "[Now], I buy a good Peet's Coffee ... in the morning to warm and wake me up."

Senior and Starbucks barista, Vaidehi Tenkale is influenced by her customers.

"I was making [many] caramel macchiatos [for customers], so I tried it myself and realized it tastes so good," Tenkale said.

Additionally, social media and pop culture can also factor into an individual's caffeine choices.

"I [watch] 'Gilmore Girls,' and a large part of that show is excessive caffeine drinking," said junior Mia Thurrell. "It influences fans [to drink caffeine too]."

Caffeinated foods and beverages will likely continue to be a staple in many lives, boosting energy, increasing alertness and sharpening focus.

Holly Estrada

"Over time, Pepsi or Diet Coke didn't give me the zap that I wanted, so I started trying energy drinks, and I was like 'oh my gosh, this really does give me wings!'"

Cathryn Kliegel

"I was staying in a tiny village [farm] up in the mountains in Switzerland. They milked the cows that morning, and that milk was in the coffee. It was the best cup of coffee I've ever had."

Benjamin Ricket, 12

"In terms of portability and ease of use, roasted coffee beans can just be eaten straight. I do have that for lunch sometimes."

A cup of green tea:
25 - 45mg



A bottle of Coca-Cola:
53 mg

A shot of espresso:
64 mg



A cup of coffee:
95 mg



A can of Monster:
160 mg



A can of PRIME:
200 mg



CAFFEINE'S CONSEQUENCES

Many rely on caffeine to stay focused and alert throughout the day. For high school students, caffeine can boost their energy levels and concentration in class.

"[I drink] coffee because I get less sleep," said sophomore Seona Srivastava. "The caffeine gives [me] a sense of rush that makes me more productive."

Senior and Starbucks barista Giuliana Mendez noticed that caffeine seemed to affect the mood of her customers.

"When I work the morning shifts, [customers] can be really rude," Mendez said. "Then once they have coffee, all of a sudden, they're really nice. It's like [not having caffeine] almost gives them an excuse to be mean."

Beyond the immediate effects, some caffeine consumers end up developing a reliance on caffeine to get through the day.

"I've come to the point where I get withdrawal symptoms if I don't drink [coffee] for a day," said senior Daigo Hayashi.

Despite the downsides, many students and faculty alike find the habit a difficult one to break.

"How am I possibly going to get through the morning without [caffeine] to give me that little boost?" said English teacher Holly Estrada. "It's a bit ridiculous. I think we emotionally rely on that drink."

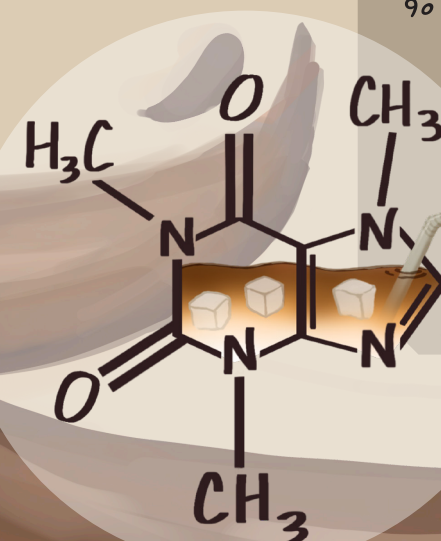
CAFFIENDS

CHEMICALLY CAFFEINATED

All the effects of caffeine can be linked to its chemical properties. Caffeine is a stimulant naturally found in many plants, and functions by repressing a neurotransmitter responsible for sleep and relaxation. This interference leads to caffeine's effects, including heightened alertness, quickened heartbeat and reduced drowsiness.

A study published in 2020 by psychiatrist and psychotherapist Dimitris Repantis et al, observed that participants who received a 200-milligram dose of caffeine 90 minutes before a cognitive test were able to remember roughly six percent more words in an immediate memory test, and up to 30% more words 24 hours after the first test. However, the same study also suggested that the sustained attention of participants under the influence of caffeine exhibited a roughly three percent decrease as opposed to those who had not consumed caffeine.

While this one study alone is incapable of painting the whole picture of the various effects of caffeine, it does illustrate the complexity of the subject.



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