

KNOW YOUR STUFF

CAFFEINE

AKA: coffee, tea, energy drinks & brand names



WHAT IS IT?

The most common way people use caffeine is to drink it, in the form of coffee, tea and energy drinks, though it is also in foods such as chocolate.

THE HIGHS

Feeling more awake and alert.

THE LOWS

Too much – which varies from person to person, with some unable to tolerate any or only very small quantities at a time – can leave someone feeling jittery and anxious to the point that they find it difficult to concentrate. They may feel sweaty, have a stomach ache or headache, and notice they are going to the toilet more often. There can be mood swings, difficulty sleeping, and changes in behaviour such as choosing unhealthy foods and not doing very well at school. Energy drinks can be very high in sugar, causing weight gain and poor dental health.

People become tolerant to caffeine quite quickly, which may lead to them using more – this increases the risk of side effects, and withdrawal symptoms if they stop using it quickly. Taking a lot of caffeine can cause vomiting, diarrhoea, shakiness, and potentially dangerous effects such as a very fast heart rate, hallucinations (seeing or hearing things that aren't there) and seizures.

Caffeine is recognised as an addictive substance, and some people with mental health conditions such as anxiety or who are feeling suicidal have been known to say they feel worse if they use it. Caffeine is commonly used in the making of illegal drugs, particularly other stimulants such as cocaine and ecstasy, and can increase the risk of harmful effects. Mixing with alcohol isn't a good idea, as it increases risky behaviour such as drink driving, unsafe sex and having an accident as the user perceives their coordination or judgement to be better than it really is.



For more information go to:



<https://www.drugwise.org.uk/caffeine/>



DSM foundation
The drug education charity

www.dsmfoundation.org.uk

—The—
**Wellbeing
Hub**
—from Teen Tips—



www.teentips.co.uk