



## Caffeine Kick

by Lorraine Wallace

**F**or some of you, this topic will be of no concern, but for others, this is going to be tough. You're going to hate me for suggesting to take away something akin to your baby's blankie.... Yes – I'm going to challenge some of you to try a caffeine free week or at the very least, reduce your consumption.

I'm particularly talking coffee here as caffeine in tea is less of an issue for most. That's not to say coffee is all bad, it most certainly isn't in small doses, but if you suffer from any of the negative effects of caffeine, I seriously recommend you test out for yourself if this could be the cause.

So first let's take a look at the health benefits of caffeine...

- Great for keeping you alert
- Improves happiness and sense of wellbeing
- Boosts athletic performance
- Can help reduce muscle pain
- Aids absorption of some medications
- May help to burn fat and sugar
- Is an antioxidant
- May help some disease prevention such as Parkinson's
- Can be a relief for asthmatic symptoms

And now the bad news...

- Cardiovascular Problems
- Stress
- Irritability, Restlessness, Insomnia, Agitation
- Blood Sugar Swings
- Gastrointestinal Problems
- Nutritional Deficiencies
- Health Concerns for Men – urinary and prostate issues
- Health Concerns for women – Fibrocystic breast disease, PMS, osteoporosis, infertility and more
- Aging
- Adrenal Fatigue

My husband and I have never been regular coffee drinkers, however, a couple of years back, Stuart went through a phase of having a cup every evening. It took about 2 weeks to work out that this was the cause of insomnia for that period, which he'd never suffered from before. As soon as he stopped, he went back to his normal sleep pattern. Some people it affects, some it doesn't.

### Do what works for YOU!

Try not to get caught up in recommendations for specific quantities, what's important is to know how it affects you personally, not your friend. Not everyone will be negatively affected. Some people go their whole lives experiencing absolutely no negative effects, but many do and the results can range from mild to severe. So if any symptoms sound familiar, I challenge you to try a caffeine free period for a week, or reduce the quantity, and see how you feel.

**Word of warning:** Caffeine is an addiction for some. Withdrawing can initially give unwanted symptoms such as headaches, drowsiness, lethargy, cold-like symptoms, anxiety and irritability. If you are a heavy consumer of caffeine, it may be wise to withdraw gradually. Rest assured though, these symptoms pass as your body cleanses itself.



Try decaffeinated coffee if you still need the coffee taste, otherwise take it as an opportunity to try something different - a herbal tea or smoothie maybe?

**Remember it's all about YOU and how YOU feel and only you can test this.**

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