

A GUIDE TO TAKING A BREAK FROM CAFFEINE

WHAT TO EXPECT THROUGH THE ELIMINATION PROCESS

The way the body responds when caffeine is eliminated is different for everyone. Some will breeze through it and others will feel a bit lousy for a period of time.

Some of the more common symptoms of caffeine withdrawal include:

- Headaches
- Fatigue
- Brain fog
- Body aches
- Nausea

These symptoms usually only last a couple of days at the most, and clear completely within a week. More than likely, when you pop out the other side, you'll be surprised how much more energy you have without it!



Try reducing your intake rather than going cold turkey

Slowly weaning yourself off caffeine rather than eliminating it in one day can reduce the severity of any symptoms you may experience or mean you don't experience them at all.

Start by halving your usual intake, then reduce it to a quarter, switch to decaf and finally move to green tea (or eliminate caffeine altogether) over a week. This will help your body better acclimatise to the change.

Magnesium can be a wonderful support for headaches

If you know you're prone to headaches, you might like to supplement magnesium citrate or take Epsom salts baths while you're eliminating caffeine. Remember also that magnesium is readily available in vegetables, especially leafy greens, so make sure you keep your intake of those up, too.





Green Tea

Up to two cups of green tea per day is okay during the course. Green tea contains a small amount of caffeine—about 30mg per cup. However, it also contains high levels of antioxidants, with research showing these substances support detoxification processes. Green tea also contains theanine, an amino acid that helps to buffer the effects of caffeine.

What about chocolate?

Chocolate does fall into the processed foods category and is often laden with sugar, not to mention dairy. However, there are a few nourishing chocolate options available and it's also pretty easy to make. A small amount—such as two squares—of good quality dark chocolate, or recipes that include cacao are fine, just keep your intake low.

Is kombucha a good choice? Does it contain caffeine?

Please feel free to have some kombucha if you enjoy this and it nourishes you. Tea is used to make kombucha, however, because it is significantly diluted, the caffeine content is minimal. Caffeine sensitive people will notice that even kombucha too late in the day affects their ability to fall asleep. Many people though, find kombucha to be great for their digestion/gut health and it also makes a great alternative to alcohol, so it may help to ease your transition to being alcohol free for the course. If you are buying it, we recommend checking the label and choosing a lower sugar option (less than 3g per 100mL) as some brands add additional sugar after the fermentation process to sweeten the taste. Please also avoid artificially-sweetened kombucha.

Can I have decaf coffee?

All decaffeinated products still have a small amount of caffeine in them, and some use synthetic chemicals in the decaffeination process. Throughout this course, Dr Libby would prefer you to switch to herbal teas or green tea. However, you could use decaf as a way of weaning off coffee. Just opt for Swiss water filtered if you can (to avoid the synthetic chemicals otherwise used in the decaffeination process).

Caffeine consumption aside, this elimination of caffeine (except for green tea if you choose to have it) is also about bringing awareness to your habits or your perceived 'need' for coffee—that part of the puzzle is just as important to explore as the caffeine removal itself.

What are some hot drinks/tea or coffee alternatives that I could have?

Herbal teas are great! If you enjoy the bitter taste of coffee, you might like to try roasted dandelion tea with some unsweetened almond or rice milk (or just with water). Dandelion tea is great for the liver and gallbladder and many supermarkets stock this. Many cafes now offer options like dandelion lattes and turmeric lattes (made with non-dairy milks), too. Some other lovely herbal teas include rooibos tea, peppermint tea, chamomile tea, etc.



COMMON SOURCES OF CAFFEINE



ESPRESSO
107 mg/serve



CAFE LATTE (250ML)
113-282 mg/serve



INSTANT COFFEE (250ML)
60-80 mg/serve



ICED COFFEE (500ML)
30-200 mg/serve



BREWED COFFEE VENTI (600ML)
415 mg/serve



TEA (250ML)
25-110 mg/serve



GREEN TEA (250ML)
30-50 mg/serve



DECAF (250ML)
2-5 mg/serve



COLA (355ML)
36-48 mg/serve



ENERGY DRINK (250ML)
80 mg/serve



DARK CHOCOLATE (30G)
20 mg/serve