

Caffeine boost

Three-five cups of coffee daily lowers early death risk

THREE TO FIVE cups of coffee a day may lower the risk of dying prematurely from some illnesses than those who do not drink or drink less coffee, new research suggests. The researchers from Harvard University's T.H. Chan School of Public Health found that drinkers of both caffeinated and decaffeinated coffee saw benefits, including a lower risk of death from cardiovascular disease, neurological diseases, Type 2 diabetes and suicide.

"Bioactive compounds in coffee reduce insulin resistance and systematic inflammation," said first author and doctoral student Ming Ding. Researchers analysed health data gathered from participants in three large ongoing studies.

Coffee drinking was assessed using validated food questionnaires every four years over about 30 years. During the study period, 19,524 women and 12,432 men died from a range of causes.

In the whole study population, moderate coffee consumption was associated with reduced risk of death from cardiovascular disease, diabetes, neurological diseases such as Parkinson's disease and suicide.

Coffee consumption was not associated with cancer deaths. The analyses took into consideration potential confounding factors such as smoking, body mass index, physical activity, alcohol consumption, and other dietary factors. "This study provides further evidence that moderate consumption of coffee may confer health benefits in terms of reducing premature death due to several diseases," said senior author Frank Hu, professor of nutrition and epidemiology.

However, more studies are needed to investigate the biological mechanisms producing these effects, the authors noted in a paper that appeared online in the journal *Circulation*. IANS



Bullies at higher risk of eating disorders

NOT JUST VICTIMS, even bullies themselves are at an increased risk for anxiety, depression and eating disorders, a new study says. In this study of 1,420 children, the researchers found that those who bullied others were twice

as likely to display symptoms of bulimia, such as binge eating and purging, when compared to children who are not involved in bullying.

"For a long time, there is been this story about bullies that they are a little more hale

and hearty," said lead author William Copeland from Duke University School of Medicine in US. "Maybe they are good at manipulating social situations or getting out of trouble, but in this one area it seems that is not the case at all," Copeland stated. Maybe teasing others may sensitise them to their own body image issues, or afterward, they have regret for their actions that results in these symptoms like binge eating followed by purging or excess exercise, Copeland explained.

The researchers found that children who were both bullies and victims had the highest prevalence of anorexia symptoms and also the highest prevalence of binge eating and vomiting as a way to maintain their weight. But the impact of bullying behaviour on those

who were bullies was also significant, with 30.8 per cent of bullies having symptoms of bulimia compared to 17.6 per cent of children not involved in bullying.

All of these behaviours can have devastating effects on the long-term health of children, Cynthia Bulik from University of North Carolina School of Medicine in US pointed out.

"The bullies' own body dissatisfaction could fuel their taunting of others. Our findings tell us to raise our vigilance for eating disorders in anyone involved in bullying exchanges - regardless of whether they are the aggressor, the victim, or both," Bulik said.

The findings will be published in a forthcoming issue of the *International Journal of Eating Disorders*. IANS

ALIGN YOUR LIFE

One Day At A Time

Iwent through a phase in my life when things were chaotic for many years and there was no light at the end of the tunnel. I was stuck in a dead-end job, a dying relationship, and had no savings. My health was giving way and I had no direction or goal. Years passed by and all I did was complain. Until one day I could not take it any more and quit my job on a whim, not knowing what lay ahead. The step taken out of frustration turned out to be the biggest blessing in my life that led me to explore greener pastures and find happiness.

All of us have good and bad days. But some have more bad days than good. So how does one survive and find that silver lining that's not obviously visible to the naked eye?

Firstly get some perspective. When you are neck deep in a problem it's difficult to be objective about it. So take a step back. Pull yourself out of the emotional attachment to the problem and get a bird's-eye view. Sometimes looking at a problem from a different perspective helps in gaining a better understanding.

Ask for help. Many believe that asking for help is a sign of weakness. However reaching out for help is a sign of strength. There will always be family and friends who will be there to guide you or hold your hand through rough times. Sometimes all you have to do is ask.

Ask the right questions. If you are in a situation that is not favourable or stuck in a dead-end job, ask yourself: "What can I do to bring more joy in my workplace? Am I in the right profession?" Asking the right questions invariably gets you the right answer. Keep asking. In many cases the answer is right in front of you.

Look at the bright side. Even during the worst phase of my life I always found something that gave me joy. A movie, a book, coffee with a friend or an afternoon spent with family laughing over silly jokes. When you look at the world around you and see many types of crisis unfolding; you will thank your lucky stars that you are better off than many people.

And last but not the least - take one day at a time. Remember Rome was not built in a day. To create the life of your dreams you need to set goals, have realistic timelines and then slowly start moving in that direction. If you keep going at it, you will finally reach your destination, no matter what.

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