

Caffeine Causing Diabetes?

by Raymond Francis

Diabetes is a disease condition distinguished by an inability to control blood-sugar levels, due to insufficient production of or heightened resistance to the hormone insulin. Interestingly, diabetes researchers induce diabetes in laboratory animals by feeding them small doses of a chemical called alloxan. Alloxan poisons insulin-producing cells in the pancreas, killing those cells and thus creating the conditions of diabetes. Knowing this, imagine the surprise of Dr. Alfred Nickel, an oral surgeon with degrees in biochemistry and pharmacology, who discovered in the scientific literature that alloxan is produced in the body from caffeine. Dr. Nickel theorized that caffeine could be a significant cause of diabetes in humans. People who consume a lot of caffeine will produce a lot of alloxan; this could cause diabetes or make existing diabetes worse.

Dr. Nickel was a heavy coffee drinker himself and had also developed adult diabetes. His diabetes got worse over time, and he was taking insulin to manage his disease. He decided to experiment—first on himself. He went off of all caffeine; after two weeks he was able to go off of insulin, and has remained off ever since! This had a profound effect on Dr. Nickel's health in general. His eyesight returned to where it had been fifteen years prior and his energy levels soared. He then passed this information on to his patients, and 40 out of 45 diabetics were able to reverse their disease by removing caffeine from their diet. Dr. Nickel witnessed patients, who were so sick with diabetes they were unable to climb up stairs, suddenly able to throw away their crutches away and run! He observed blood glucose levels return to normal after only a few weeks on a caffeine-free diet.

Caffeine consumption in the US is now at pharmacological (medically significant) levels. The dose of caffeine that will produce noticeable biological effects is roughly 200 mg. The average per capita consumption is now 206 mg/day, however, someone consuming 6 to 8 cups of coffee per day can be getting as much as 4000 mg/day. Due to biochemical individuality, some people are more or less tolerant to specific toxins than others. Those who are less tolerant to caffeine-produced alloxan, will likely get sick.

Alloxan is a free radical generator. Free radicals are known to damage the body, causing it to age and develop disease, including cancer. Since alloxan damages the pancreas, it may specifically be a contributor to pancreatic cancer. In fact, while Dr. Nickel and I were discussing this topic on my radio show, a woman called in and told us about her husband who died of pancreatic cancer after consuming as many as 16 cups of coffee a day for many years.

Many caffeinated products are popular with kids, and diabetes is rapidly growing in that age group. Medical experts have expressed alarm at the increasing rates of adult diabetes found in children. Meanwhile, caffeine has blossomed into a multi-billion dollar industry, largely aimed at teens and college students. Manufacturers are putting it into just about everything they can think of. Wrigley has a chewing gum in which one stick contains the caffeine equivalent of a cup of coffee. Pepsi and Coke have always contained substantial amounts of caffeine, and these companies have other products (Mountain Dew and Surge) with even higher quantities. Jolt Cola, a soda aimed at the 15-21 year-old market, contains 50 percent more caffeine than other sodas and continues to increase in its popularity. Jolt Cola even has a candy called Jolt, which is advertised as, "America's most powerful candy." Even orange juice and bottled water are now available in caffeinated versions. A few years ago, Celestial Seasonings introduced a highly

caffeinated "Fast Lane Tea." Caffeine is a prolific toxin in our diet, and consumption keeps going up!

While there is rarely a single cause of disease, it appears that caffeine is a major contributor to disease. Caffeine is a significant contributor to our epidemic of diabetes, depression, and perhaps pancreatic cancer as well as other diseases. Interestingly, it is well known that caffeine can produce a "high," but less known that it can also cause depression. So why consume all this caffeine? Because we need it to get through the day. The U.S. population is not healthy, and we lack the boundless energy of traditionally healthy populations. Instead, we look to stimulants like caffeine to rev up the system. This is like constantly whipping a tired horse-eventually that horse will collapse.

Anyone with diabetes should absolutely avoid all caffeine from any source. Those wishing to prevent diabetes should sharply limit caffeine intake from coffee, soft drinks, tea, chocolate, or any other source. The damage done to the pancreas by alloxan from caffeine is cumulative; the longer it goes on, and the more caffeine one ingests, the more irreparable damage is done. Even decaffeinated products should be avoided, because the decaffeinating process removes only the unbound, soluble caffeine. These products still contain a bound form of caffeine that is capable of producing alloxan.

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