

# HEALTHY BODY



New studies point to its powerful potential health benefits. And the latest blends? Delish. Find out why...

## Green Tea Is Very Hot

BY STACEY COLINO



**DR. OZ ON  
TEA**

"I adore green tea. A cup of it gives me an energy boost without all the caffeine of coffee, so I turn to it as a pick-me-up in the evening."





## FIND YOUR FAVORITE

**Be a Goldlocks** Keep trying green-tea blends until you hit on one that's just right. Tea Masters Daniel Johnson and Jennie Goldin suggest these types, available from websites such as [theteaspot.com](http://theteaspot.com) and [teavana.com](http://teavana.com).

### GRASSY

*Sencha*, a classic Japanese tea, brews a bright yellow-green and tastes of sweet, fresh grass.

### SMOKY

Gunpowder green is strong with a sweetish aftertaste. Coffee lovers should try this one.

### FLORAL

The tender, hand-rolled leaves of jasmine pearl are infused with the aroma of jasmine blossoms.

### TOASTY

*Hojicha*, a rich, nutty tea, is low in caffeine.

### EARTHY

*Gyokuro*, Japanese for "jade dew," may remind you of freshly buttered greens.

RESEARCHERS ARE obsessed with green tea, and we get why: More than 100 studies show that it can be a powerful ally in the fight against a wide range of diseases, including cancer, diabetes, and arthritis.

How come green trumps black, which is also healthful? Both come from the same plant, but the leaves are processed differently: Black tea leaves are dried, while green tea leaves are lightly steamed or pan-fried, so they retain more good-for-you compounds called catechins, which have impressive anti-inflammatory, antibacterial, and antioxidant properties.

So, green tea is good—and fresh is best, says Selena Ahmed, Ph.D., an assistant

professor of sustainable food systems at Montana State University. After six months of sitting around, green tea loses up to half its health-promoting oomph—so check the sell-by date on packaged tea. (And if you're taking any medications, check with your doctor about possible interactions with green tea.) The benefits of green tea kick in at two to three eight-ounce cups a day, experts say. Take a look at what those mugsfuls can do for you:

### Keep your mind sharp

Green tea seems to enhance working memory, attention, and spatial learning (the smarts you need to navigate

## ➔ SUPERMARKET PICKS WE LOVED

Our staff taste-tested blends in easy-to-buy, easy-to-brew tea bags. These got raves, even from green-tea skeptics:



**Mighty Leaf Marrakesh Mint**  
"Would be delicious iced."  
"So refreshing."



**Bigelow Green Tea Classic**  
"Darned good; I'd buy it."  
"Pleasantly mild."



**Rishi Organic Tropical Green**  
"Loved this! The pineapple smell lingered." "Überfruity!"



**Numi Organic Tea Toasted Rice**  
"Nutty, savory, and satisfying. I'd drink it daily."



## GREEN, BUT NOT GREAT

"Adding green tea doesn't automatically make something healthy," says Leslie Bonci, R.D., at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center. "Check labels for fat, calories, sugar, and sodium."

### ICE CREAM

It's full of fat and sugar—and the smidge of green tea isn't enough to be beneficial.

### CANDY & COOKIES

They're sugary, the cookies contain lots of fat, and the green tea content in both is too small to do you good.

### LATTE

Sugar-laden—and the milk interferes with green tea's healthful properties.

### BOTTLED TEA

Many are as unhealthy as a sugary soda. Buy unsweetened, and add your own sweetener, Bonci suggests.

anywhere). As you age, it may also protect brain cells against diseases such as Alzheimer's and Parkinson's.

### Protect your heart

Those antioxidant and anti-inflammatory powers can help control several risk factors for heart disease and for type 2 diabetes. Green tea can also boost the body's ability to take up glucose from the bloodstream and use it for energy. The result: lower blood-sugar levels.

### May lower cancer risk

Researchers at three major U.S. universities are finding that green tea may reduce the risk of developing cancer of the mouth, esophagus, colon, lungs, prostate, and breast. The theory: Compounds in green tea may prevent the formation of abnormal cells that could lead to the disease, and may also turn on genes that suppress tumors and abnormal cell growth.

### Manage your weight

A specific catechin plus the caffeine in green tea may slightly raise the body's metabolic rate. The impact isn't huge—about 10 calories per day. But green tea will certainly help you slim down if you drink it in place of calorie-loaded beverages.

### Save your skin

The antioxidants in green tea may slow the signs of aging (wrinkles, sagging) and help guard against skin cancer by repairing UV-induced damage.

### Maintain healthy teeth

Green tea can reduce bacteria levels in the mouth, which cuts down on cavities. And it can block gum disease by lowering levels of body chemicals that promote bacteria and inflammation. ●

## ➔ "CAN I ADD..."



### LEMON?

Definitely! Your body will absorb up to five times more catechins when you add citrus juice to your green tea, Purdue University researchers found.



### SUGAR OR HONEY?

Yes, but go easy; both add calories. A little of either won't reduce the benefits of green tea.



### MILK?

No. Proteins in milk diminish the absorption of green tea's beneficial compounds. Adding milk also eliminates the calorie-burning boost.