

# Another coffee perk: lower risk of high-grade prostate cancer

By ACSH Staff — May 20, 2011

A large study from the Harvard School of Public Health indicates that regularly drinking even one cup of coffee daily may [reduce a man's risk](#) [1] of developing high-grade prostate cancer. Published in Wednesday's issue of the *Journal of the National Cancer Institute*, the study monitored nearly 48,000 U.S. men from the Health Professionals Follow-up Study to evaluate a potential association between coffee consumption and prostate cancer risk. The test subjects reported their coffee consumption every four years from 1986 to 2008. The men who consumed the most coffee (six or more cups daily) exhibited a 60 percent reduced risk of having an aggressive form of prostate cancer and a 20 percent reduced risk of developing any form of prostate cancer. But the results also indicate that you don't have to consume that much coffee to reduce your risk: those who drank one to three cups had a 30 percent reduced risk of high-grade prostate cancer. The researchers controlled for a number of risk factors, including smoking and sedentary lifestyle, which the researchers found to be less common among the coffee drinkers. Further, the effect was seen with both regular and decaf.

"If our findings are validated, coffee could represent one modifiable factor that may lower the risk of developing the most harmful form of prostate cancer," said lead author Kathryn Wilson, a research fellow in epidemiology at HSPH.

Caffeinated coffee can, however, have unwanted side effects. For instance, it can worsen incontinence for men who already have an overactive bladder. In addition, caffeine may irritate the bladder. ACSH's Dr. Gilbert Ross, however, would take the risk if the prostate cancer benefits are confirmed. "If these results are true, the reduced risk of aggressive prostate cancer would, in my opinion, outweigh the potential bladder issues — especially for those of us who are both over 60 and love coffee!"

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[1] <http://www.heraldsun.com.au/news/breaking-news/coffee-cuts-risk-of-prostate-cancer/story-e6frf7jx-1226057927664>