

Coffee Should Scare You More Than Werewolves



By Ruth Kava — October 30, 2015



[1]
[werewolf drinking coffee via shutterstock](#) [2]

'Tis the season to be wary, what with werewolves, vampires and ghouls roaming around the neighborhood. But what may *actually* be scary is coffee.

Yes, that's right, coffee. While thus far the research report refers only to coffee sampled in Spain, it's certainly possible that similar concerns might apply to American brands as well.

The problem? Fungi. Or more accurately, toxins produced by some types of fungus in aggregate termed mycotoxins. Spanish researchers from the University of Valencia [analyzed](#) [3] 100 samples of coffee, instant and brewed, caffeinated and decaf, to see if they contained any of 18 different types of mycotoxins, and if so, how much.

Mycotoxins are produced by various fungi such as *Aspergillus* and *Fusarium*, and are known to be associated with several ills, including liver cancer. Some may also be psychoactive. These fungi grow on grains such as wheat, rye, oats and corn, especially if the grain has been damaged by disease or insect activity.

Levels of only one mycotoxin, ochratoxin A, are regulated in Spain, and the researchers found only a few samples that exceeded the regulatory limits two samples of decaf coffee, two samples of coffee capsules and one sample of decaf coffee capsule.

One researcher, Dr. Emilia Ferrer, noted that since coffee is consumed so frequently, it would be important to evaluate the effects of various types of processing on ochratoxins as well as on the other mycotoxins found in coffee. Only by getting such information can any risk to the coffee-drinking population be reliably evaluated.

So, when those ghouls and vampires come around on Halloween, be pleasant and invite them in for a cup of java.

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