Black Tea May Protect Bone Health for Elderly

By ACSH Staff — November 20, 2015

While everyone continues to go wild for coffee, in some countries tea is considered a necessity of life. It’s a beverage that can make you feel relaxed, or wake you up when you need an extra push to get through the day.

Besides from simply being enjoyable, a recent study published in the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition suggests that drinking three cups of tea per day may cut down on the risk of fragile bones among the elderly, as well as reduce the risk of illnesses such as cancer and heart disease.

Researchers from the Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital in Perth, the Royal Perth Hospital and the Flinders University of South Australia in Adelaide, studied approximately 1,200 women in their seventies over a 10-year period who drank black tea. They closely monitored subjects for signs of fractures caused by osteoporosis.

During this period 288 women -- nearly a third -- had fallen and broken a bone, with nearly half of those injuries involving a hip fracture. The results indicated that women who drank three or more cups of tea every day were 30 percent less likely to have suffered a bone break, as compared to those who drank less than one cup of tea per week.

Researchers also noted that even one cup of tea per week can reduce the risk of fracture by 9 percent. Findings were linked to powerful flavonoids in black tea that contain antioxidants.

Black tea comes from the same plant as white and green tea, yet its flavonoid profile is not the same. During the growth process, black tea develops different types of flavonoids, containing antioxidant traits that may help prevent heart disease and some cancers. However, further research is needed to support this theory.

One in three women will develop osteoporosis in their lifetime. Women most at risk are those who use steroids, take drugs, drink alcohol excessively or have a family history of the disease.

As the U.S. population ages, the number of people suffering hip fractures annually is expected
to rise to 250,000, according to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.