



Dose of Information

A fact sheet by
Northern
New England
Poison Center

Caffeine Energy Drinks

People use caffeine to stay awake or to focus on a task. Some caffeine may be safe, but too much may be harmful. Limiting the number and the type of caffeinated drinks is a good way to prevent having too much caffeine.

How much caffeine is a problem?

How much is too much depends on a person's health and weight, medicines taken and frequency of use.

Who should limit use of caffeine?

Some people are at risk for problems from too much caffeine including anyone:

- With heart problems or seizures
- Diagnosed with anxiety or bipolar disorder
- Who takes medicine for attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)
- Who is doing an activity that will increase their heart rate (for example, playing sports)

What can happen with too much caffeine?

- Upset stomach, vomiting, diarrhea
- Headache, dizziness, irritability, anxiety, tremors, seizures
- Fast and irregular heartbeat, high blood pressure, chest pain

If someone has had a lot of caffeine and experiences any of the above symptoms, call the Northern New England Poison Center at 1-800-222-1222 for advice on how to treat the person.

What happens when caffeine is mixed with alcohol?

Mixing alcohol and caffeine may lead to risky behavior. Caffeine will not lessen the sleepy effects of alcohol. It will also not make an intoxicated person feel less drunk. In fact, mixing alcohol and caffeine may make driving, and other activities, worse than alcohol alone.

Caffeine Quick Guide: How much caffeine is in your drink?

Drink	Caffeine (mg)	Serving
Brewed tea	53 (range 40-120)	8 oz.
Brewed coffee	133 (range 102-220)	8 oz.
Espresso	40 (range 30-90)	1 oz.
Soft drink (with caffeine)	range 23-71	12 oz.
Energy drink	range 48-286	8 oz.

Caffeine Quick Guide Source: The Center for Science and Public Interest. (2007). *Caffeine Content of Foods & Drugs*. Retrieved October 2, 2008. from: <http://www.cspinet.org/new/cafchart.htm>

Call the
Northern New England Poison Center
1-800-222-1222

Voice/TTY/ 

Interpretation Services Available
Relay Service: 7-1-1



Poison Emergencies
Prevention Questions
Medication Safety
24hrs • Free • Confidential
www.nnepc.org

The NNEPC is supported by: Maine Medical Center, a member of the MaineHealth Family; Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention, Department of Health and Human Services; The United Way; New Hampshire Department of Safety; Vermont Department of Health; Fletcher Allen Health Care. The NNEPC is also supported by funds received through grant # H4BHS00078 awarded by the Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the Health Resources and Services Administration, Division of Healthcare Preparedness, Healthcare Systems Bureau.