

[IMAGE]

## Tea Time

By Editorial Staff

Recent studies praising the many health benefits of tea - reduced rates of heart attack, stroke, diabetes and some cancers - have increased its popularity and consumption. Additional research now suggests tea can help focus a scattered mind.

Much of the current research has examined the healthful properties of tea: antioxidants, flavonols, catechins and lignans. These elements can help the body fight off disease, improve blood vessel dilation and lower the risk of aortic atherosclerosis.

New research suggests components in the leaves of the plant could help people focus and pay more attention to certain tasks. The purported mechanism for this action is an amino acid called theanine, which is found in green, black and oolong teas.

As more and more properties are studied, tea could prove to be a great ally in the fight against other major diseases including Alzheimer's and Parkinson's disease. In fact, a study done on mice at the National Parkinson Foundation Centers in Israel found that the main antioxidant in tea showed an ability to slow brain cell death and encourage neurons to repair themselves.

So, next time you're at your local coffee hangout, don't order a cup of joe - try a soothing cup of tea instead. Give your body and mind a boost.

A large glass mug filled with tea and a tea bag. - Copyright © Stock Photo / Register Mark

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