[IMAGE]

Tea: It Does a Body Good

It’s no secret that tea is good for you: Drinking tea is known to help prevent heart disease and cancer. Tea also contains high amounts of caffeine, flavonoids, phytoestrogens, and fluoride -- all compounds suspected of exerting influence on bone mineral density (BMD). Low bone density can increase a person’s risk for broken bones.

The authors of a study in the *Archives of Internal Medicine* wanted to evaluate the effects of tea on bone strength. They questioned over 1,000 Taiwanese individuals about how much tea they drank and how long they had been regular tea drinkers. Bone scans were used to measure BMD in the spine, hip, and total skeleton of the individuals, who were all age 30 or older.

Drinking tea regularly for 6-10 years was associated with higher BMD in the spine, and drinking tea for over 10 years was associated with a higher BMD at all measurement sites. The amount of tea consumed per day or week was not significantly linked to bone density -- only the duration. Half of all the people studied were habitual tea drinkers.

Tea comes in different forms: green (unfermented), oolong (partially fermented), or black (fermented) tea; all three types were similarly related to BMD in this study. Consider drinking any form of tea instead of other less-healthy beverages like soft drinks and coffee.

Reference:

Wu CH, Yang YC, Yao WJ, et al. Epidemiological evidence of increased bone mineral density in habitual tea drinkers. *Archives of Internal Medicine* 2002:162(9), pp. 1001-1006.

For more information on good nutrition, go to http://www.chiroweb.com/find/archives/nutrition.

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