

**TEA SHOULD BE CLASSED AS A**

**NATURAL MEDICINE**

claims new study

The British may be a nation of tea drinkers but perhaps they would be surprised to discover that, in some cultures, tea is viewed as a natural medicine.

Writing in the journal, *Biomedicine and Pharmacotherapy[[1]](#footnote-2)*, researchers from China, Pakistan and Egypt brought together a range of studies looking at the medicinal properties of tea, ranging from heart disease prevention to protecting against cancer.

Commenting on the study, Dr Carrie Ruxton at the **Tea Advisory Panel**, notes: “The authors highlighted the wide range of known bioactive compounds in tea which come naturally from the tea plants. These include flavonoids, the amino acid L-theanine, caffeine, gallic acid and fluoride. They concluded that tea could be used in many circumstances to produce beneficial health effects, such as cholesterol lowering, without the risk of side effects.

“While we are clear about the host of positive compounds found in green and black tea, I’m not convinced we’re near the point where we can replace our conventional medicines. However, there is good evidence that drinking around four cups of tea a day helps prevent heart disease by boosting vascular health and reducing harmful oxidation of our blood cholesterol. We also know that tea has potent anti-bacterial effects and contains natural fluoride making it great for warding off tooth decay and gum disease.

“In days gone by, tea was used to clean wounds, treat styes of the eye lids and was even mentioned in dispatches in 1906 as being added to soldiers’ water bottles as a prophylactic against typhoid. Nowadays, studies have reported that tea reverses Helicobacter infections – a risk factor for stomach ulcers – so the antibacterial effects are real.

“Whether we view tea as a type of natural medicine or simply a refreshing, relaxing drink, it’s worth appreciating its role in a healthy diet and aiming for the optimal four cups a day”.

ENDS

**The Tea Advisory Panel:** The Tea Advisory Panel is supported by an unrestricted educational grant from the **UK TEA & INFUSIONS ASSOCIATION**, the trade association for the UK tea industry. The Panel has been created to provide media with impartial information regarding the health benefits of tea. Panel members include nutritionists; dieticians and doctors.

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1. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/29482046> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)