

**4 REASONS WHY TEA COULD BE THE SECRET TO HITTING YOUR HEALTH AND FITNESS GOALS**

***As if we needed another excuse to pop the kettle on...***

The spotlight has never shined brighter on our health and wellbeing, and now a new paper - *Tea for Sport and Fitness: A Scoping Review[[1]](#footnote-1)*, has revealed how tea could be the underrated addition to our diet for hitting those health and fitness goals, faster.

Plus, considering that the Tea Advisory Panel (TAP) says 40% of the nation's fluid intake today will be tea, it’s one of the easiest and accessible things we can do, right now, to live a healthier life.

Speaking for TAP, Dr Tim Bond explains that the Government’s UK Eatwell Guide recommends that we drink 6 to 8 glasses of fluid daily, which includes water, lower fat milk and sugar-free drinks such as tea.

In fact according to clinical trial[[2]](#footnote-2), tea has the same hydrating properties to water. Why is this important?

Dr Bond explains that it’s vital to maintain our body’s fluid balance as this can aid “cognitive, technical, and physical aspects of sports performance’. In adulthood, 50 to 60% of our body weight is water.

“Exercise can quickly disrupt this fluid balance though. More than a 2% body mass loss of water is seen as the point at which exercise dehydration can impact aerobic exercise performance. This is worse in warmer weather,” he adds.

With the UK’s NHS recommending we do 150 minutes of ‘moderate intensity’ activity or at least 75 minutes of ‘vigorous activity’ each week, it’s important we maintain an active lifestyle. Drinking tea alongside this will help keep us hydrated and could also contribute to energy, nutrients, and intakes of antioxidant filled polyphenols.

Chris Ruxton, personal trainer and cross fit champion, plus a fond lover of a cuppa says: “Staying hydrated helps with all aspects of sports performance. We should aim to maintain “euhydration”; essentially normal hydration balance and tea helps tick the boxes here.”

Tea also has several other benefits which give it A\* status, helping to support our health and fitness.

1. **Boost weight loss**

Several studies within the fascinating new paper have pointed towards green tea and its ability to aid with weight loss.

Nutritionist and advisor to TAP, Dr Emma Derbyshire explains how drinking 4 cups of matcha green tea over 24 hours actually led to increased fat oxidation when test subjects went on a 30 minute brisk walk.

“Added to this, a 12-week study in older adults showed how 3 cups of green tea a day alongside a vitamin E supplement lead to reductions in waist circumference,” adds Dr Derbyshire.

Plus, when the green tea drinking was paired with resistance training AKA lifting weights, body fat decreased even more along with an increase in muscle strength and lean body mass.

1. **Improve sleep**

A good night’s sleep is crucial to get us through the next day, and it’s been proven that 300ml or more of low-caffeine green tea can actually result in better sleep quality.

Chris Ruxton adds: “It is while we are sleeping that our body recovers and repairs itself. So, to get fitter and stronger, we need adequate rest.”

1. **Happier mood**

Stress and low mood gets to many of us, with 828,000 UK workers suffering from work-related stress, depression or anxiety in 2019/2020[[3]](#footnote-3). But popping the kettle on and rustling up a brew could help overcome this stress and improve a person’s mood.

One study in the paper discovered that the moods of altitude climbers improved when they drank hot

brewed tea during their expedition whilst other research found that drinking tea helped boost the moods of those taking part in endurance activities.

“Plus, there’s also research to show how 1 to 2 cups of tea or water a day, increased alertness with little disruption to sleep,” adds Dr Bond.

1. **Increase strength**

Who knew that tea drinking had links to muscle strength? Dr Emma Derbyshire notes how a study found that men who were given 200ml of mate tea three times a day over 8 days, had improved strength recovery in the 24 hours after exercise. Plus, women in Japan suffering from sarcopenia who drank 350ml of tea a day, had improved walking speeds over a 3 month period.

“This speed seemed to be helped by improved muscle mass strength,” adds Dr Bond who recommends including tea into your diet every day to reap the many health benefits it provides.

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**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.

1. Bond T, Derbyshire E, Jenkins G; (2021) Tea for sport and fitness: a scoping review. Nutrition and Food Technology Journal. <https://www.sciforschenonline.org/journals/nutrition-food/NFTOA174.php> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Data on file [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. https://www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/causdis/stress.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-3)