

# Tea, Black/Green

*Camellia sinensis* (L.) Kuntze (syn. *C. sinensis* L.)

[Fam. *Theaceae*]

## OVERVIEW

The use of tea as a beverage in China dates back to 2700 B.C.E. Currently, it is widely used in the traditional medical systems of China, Hong Kong, Japan, and Korea. Next to water, tea is the most widely consumed beverage in the world today. Green and black tea, though from the same plant, are processed differently and contain varying strengths of chemical compounds.

## USES

To reduce risk of atherosclerosis, cardiovascular disease, and myocardial infarction; in cases of elevated cholesterol (to help lower); possible prevention of certain cancers (breast, pancreatic, colon, lung, and esophageal); mild stimulant; possible aid in weight loss; diuretic action; possible reduced risk of osteoporosis.

## DOSAGE

**GREEN TEA INFUSION (TEA):** Pour 150–250 ml boiling water over 1.0–2.5 g finely cut dried leaf, steep 3–5 minutes for use as a stimulant. Steep 15–20 minutes and drink several times daily for diarrhea. Drink at least 1 cup daily for antioxidant effect.

**GREEN TEA POWDER:** 8 capsules (250 mg each) daily with meals to help treat obesity.

**BLACK TEA INFUSION (TEA):** Pour 150–250 ml boiling water over 2.5 g finely cut dried leaf, steep 2–5 minutes for use as a stimulant (alkaloids extract rapidly). Steep at least 10 minutes for use in treatment of diarrhea (catechins take longer to extract), 2–3 times daily. Drink 3–4 times daily for protection against atherosclerosis, 1 or more times daily to reduce risk of myocardial infarction (heart attack).

**DRY ALCOHOLIC GREEN TEA EXTRACT:** 2 capsules (250 mg each), 3 times daily with meals for weight control [standardized to 25% catechins].

## CONTRAINDICATIONS

Use with caution in weakened cardiovascular systems, kidney diseases, thyroid hyperfunction (hyperthyroid), increased susceptibility to muscle spasm, and

### Comments

When using a dietary supplement, purchase it from a reliable source. For best results, use the same brand of product throughout the period of use. As with all medications and dietary supplements, please inform your healthcare provider of all herbs and medications you are taking. Interactions may occur between medications and herbs or even among different herbs when taken at the same time. Treat your herbal supplement with care by taking it as directed, storing it as advised on the label, and keeping it out of the reach of children and pets. Consult your healthcare provider with any questions.



panicky states of anxiety.

**PREGNANCY AND LACTATION:** Pregnant women should not ingest more than 5 cups daily (300 mg caffeine daily). Drinking tea while nursing may cause sleep disorders in infants.

## ADVERSE EFFECTS

Nervousness, anxiety, heart irregularities, headaches, tremors, hypertension, restlessness, insomnia, daytime irritability, irritation of the stomach lining, and increased urination are possible adverse effects that can occur with use/overuse of central nervous system stimulants like the caffeine found in tea. However, these effects rarely occur with use of normal amounts.

## DRUG INTERACTIONS

Compounds in black tea may reduce the effects of coronary vasodilator drugs, such as dipyridamole, if taken simultaneously. Green tea has possible synergistic effects when combined with sulindac and/or tamoxifen and may reduce their adverse effects. Green tea may also interact with drugs such as the blood-thinning drug warfarin (reducing its effects), and large amounts of caffeine may increase activity and side effects of the asthma drug theophylline. Tannins in tea can also interfere with intestinal absorption of nutrients and vitamins, and may lead to microcytic anemia in children.



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