

How to Quit Caffeine

Coffee. One of the strategies to get off coffee is to slowly replace regular coffee with herbal coffee or coffee substitute. Simply brew your coffee with small amounts of herbal coffee and continue drinking the same number of cups. Over a two-week period, gradually increase the amount of herbal coffee or substitute while decreasing the coffee. This way there is no dramatic decrease in blood caffeine levels.

This method helps you to get used to new tastes, and if you are using herbal coffee, these tastes will be surprisingly rich and enjoyable. You can do this easily in a drip coffee maker or a French press pot. Use a scoop or tablespoon as a measurement and mix your regular coffee with herbal coffee as follows:

Days 1-2	4 parts regular coffee 1 part herbal coffee
Days 4-6	3 parts regular coffee 2 parts herbal coffee
Days 7-9	2 ½ parts regular coffee 2 ½ parts herbal coffee
Days 10-11	2 parts regular coffee 3 parts herbal coffee
Day 12	1 part regular coffee 4 parts herbal coffee
Day 13	½ part regular coffee 4 ½ parts herbal coffee
Day 14	5 parts herbal coffee

If you use instant coffee, you can also blend it with an instant coffee substitute. Blend each cup of coffee using both the instant coffee substitute and your regular blend of instant coffee as described above.

Black Tea. Steep your black tea for less time; Alternate every other cup of black tea with either green tea or green tea mixed with herbs or herbal tea; Gradually cut down on the number of cups of black tea you drink over a two-week period while substituting low-caffeine or caffeine-free teas.

Soft Drinks. The importance of eliminating soft drinks is to reduce caffeine as well as sugar consumption. For the first week, alternate each can of your normal soft drink with a 50/50 juice/filtered water combination. You can also try herbal teas. In the second week start substituting caffeine-free drinks for some of your cans of caffeinated cola. The rate of substitution will depend on how many cans of soda you consume to achieve a gradual reduction. By the third week you can be off soda altogether and enjoy healthful beverages while you continue to get used to less sugar. After a month of being soda free, you probably won't even miss the overly sweet taste of colas!

Combination Drinks. If you are drinking both coffee and colas, or tea and colas, the best approach is to eliminate coffee or tea first. The challenge is to keep from drinking more soft drinks than usual during this period. Once you have comfortably eliminated coffee or tea, then you can cut back on cola beverages.

Traveling Tips. Keep a selection of herbal teas in your bag. It's much easier to find a glass of hot water than it is a bag of herbal tea.

Additional Recommendations. Here are a few additional recommendations to support your body's transition out of the caffeine addiction:

- support your liver detoxification by drinking herbal infusions and exercising
- support regular elimination by getting plenty of fiber in your diet, regular exercise and incorporating ground flax seeds into your food.
- drink at least ½ your body weight in ounces of pure/filtered water (herbal teas can be included.)
- get at least 30 minutes of moderate exercise or movement each day
- eat plenty of fruits and vegetables, avoid food sensitivities, eat nutrient-rich foods such as green leafy vegetables, whole unprocessed foods, ...
- make sure you start the day with a hearty breakfast with protein
- eat at least 50-60 grams of protein each day
- supplement with fish oil, B-vitamins, Vitamin E, Vitamin C, minerals and chromium
- ensure you get at least 8 hours of sleep each night