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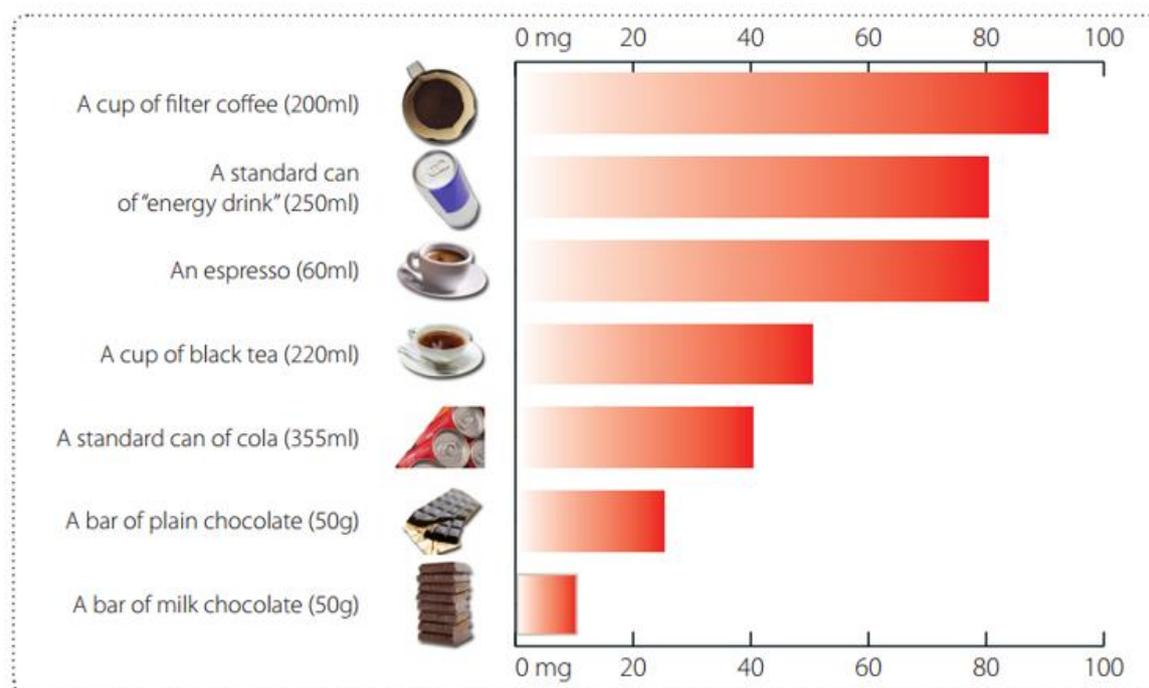
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Europe wakes up to EFSA's caffeine safety verdict

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) has just published its final Scientific Opinion¹ on the safety of caffeine.

According to this opinion, single doses of up to 200mg of caffeine and intake over a day of up to 400mg (approximately five cups of coffee) are deemed not to be a safety concern for adults, except pregnant women who should limit daily caffeine intake to 200mg.

How much caffeine is there in...



All figures are approximate as caffeine content and portion sizes vary within and between countries

¹ <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/press/news/150527.htm>

Notably, EFSA clarifies some caveats with regards to its recommendation on safe caffeine intake levels set out in its draft opinion². Specifically, EFSA did not consider people with medical conditions or disease, nor did it look into the health effects of mixing caffeine with alcohol above a drink driving limit. Additionally, EFSA acknowledges some data gaps when it comes to caffeine safety in children and caffeine intakes from food supplements.

Monique Goyens, the Director General of BEUC said:

“We appreciate EFSA’s efforts to address the comments made during the consultation phase by clarifying under which conditions its advice applies. This helped us to understand why EFSA and some national food safety bodies had reached different conclusions on issues such as caffeine interaction with alcohol.

“As reflected in EFSA’s opinion, caffeine intake is clearly an issue in some EU countries, with for instance almost one-third of Danish adults consuming more than 400mg of caffeine a day.

“The opinion also shows that 25% of teenage energy drink consumers exceed the 200mg caffeine intake limit within a short period of time. A fifth (19%) of adults who consume energy drinks on a night out or during a sport session typically ingest three or more cans. Doing so brings them also above the safe caffeine single dose.

“Now we look to the European Commission and Member States to draw the obvious conclusions. If we are to ensure Europeans’ caffeine intake stays within safe limits, banning food manufacturer claims on how caffeine increases endurance, alertness or concentration would seem a wise move”.

ENDS

² A draft of EFSA’s advice was opened for public comments at the beginning of 2015 and discussed in an expert meeting held in March.