

THE SCOOP ON COFFEE

APRIL GREETINGS FROM HEALTH MINISTRIES

I didn't like any of the choices given by the National Health Information Center; of which there were twenty-two for the month of April, so thought I'd hit on a favorite of everyone---coffee. My information comes from "Delicious Living" put out by New Life Health Center here in Tucson.

Coffee is addictive. It's delicious and may actually be healthy for you. New research suggests coffee may protect against liver cancer and Type 2 diabetes. In a number of studies, daily coffee drinkers lowered their type 2 diabetes risk by 30 to 50%, even when drinking decaf. (Decaf isn't really completely decaffeinated; it only is lower in caffeine) So-o-o-o go ahead and enjoy your cup of Joe but keep the following in mind:

CHOOSE BREWED. Drip brewing uses a coarser grind than espresso and keeps water in extended contact with the coffee, extracting more healthy compounds. *Paper coffee filters also filter out a substance called cafestol, which boosts "bad" LDL cholesterol.*

GO DARK. Sensitive to caffeine? Stick with a darker roast. Roasting breaks down caffeine, so lighter roasts are actually more potent. However, coffee aficionados swear that lighter roasting does better justice to the bean's subtle, complex flavors.

PASS ON PREGROUND. For maximum flavor, grind beans at home. Look for whole beans with a full, smooth sheen on the surface; oily spots mean the bean is old.

DIVIDE AND FREEZE. To prolong shelf life, divide coffee into zip-top bags (with enough beans to last several days), remove excess air and freeze. Taking coffee in and out of the freezer causes freezer burn and flattens the flavor, so remove bags one at a time. Always keep coffee well wrapped; beans easily absorb surrounding flavors and odors.