



GLOBAL TRENDS IN CAFFEINE CONSUMPTION AND ITS SOURCES IN CHILDREN, ADOLESCENTS AND ADULTS

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Introduction

The aim of this study was to examine current trends in daily caffeine consumption, and its sources in children, adolescents and adults.

Methods

A literature search was conducted to identify nationally representative surveys on caffeine intake and its sources, collected over the last decade.

Results

Over the past decade, data on caffeine consumption of over N=100.000 children, adolescents, adults and elderly has been gathered in USA, Europe, Asia, and Australia.

Consumption patterns

The data consistently show that mean daily total caffeine intake in children, adolescents and adults is below caffeine intake recommendations such as those by EFSA (3 mg/kg bw/day for children and adolescents, and 400 mg for adults) and Health Canada (2.5 mg/kg bw/day for children and adolescents, and 400 mg for adults).

Caffeine consumption increases with age, with highest levels observed among 50-64 year olds.

The data suggest that over the past decade, caffeine intake remained stable among all age groups.

Sources of caffeine

For adults and elderly, the main source of caffeine was coffee, followed by tea and carbonated soft drinks.

Among adolescents, greatest caffeine intake comes from carbonated soft drinks, followed by tea and coffee.

For children, chocolate and carbonated soft drinks are the main sources of caffeine intake.

Energy drinks do not play a major role regarding caffeine consumption in all age groups.

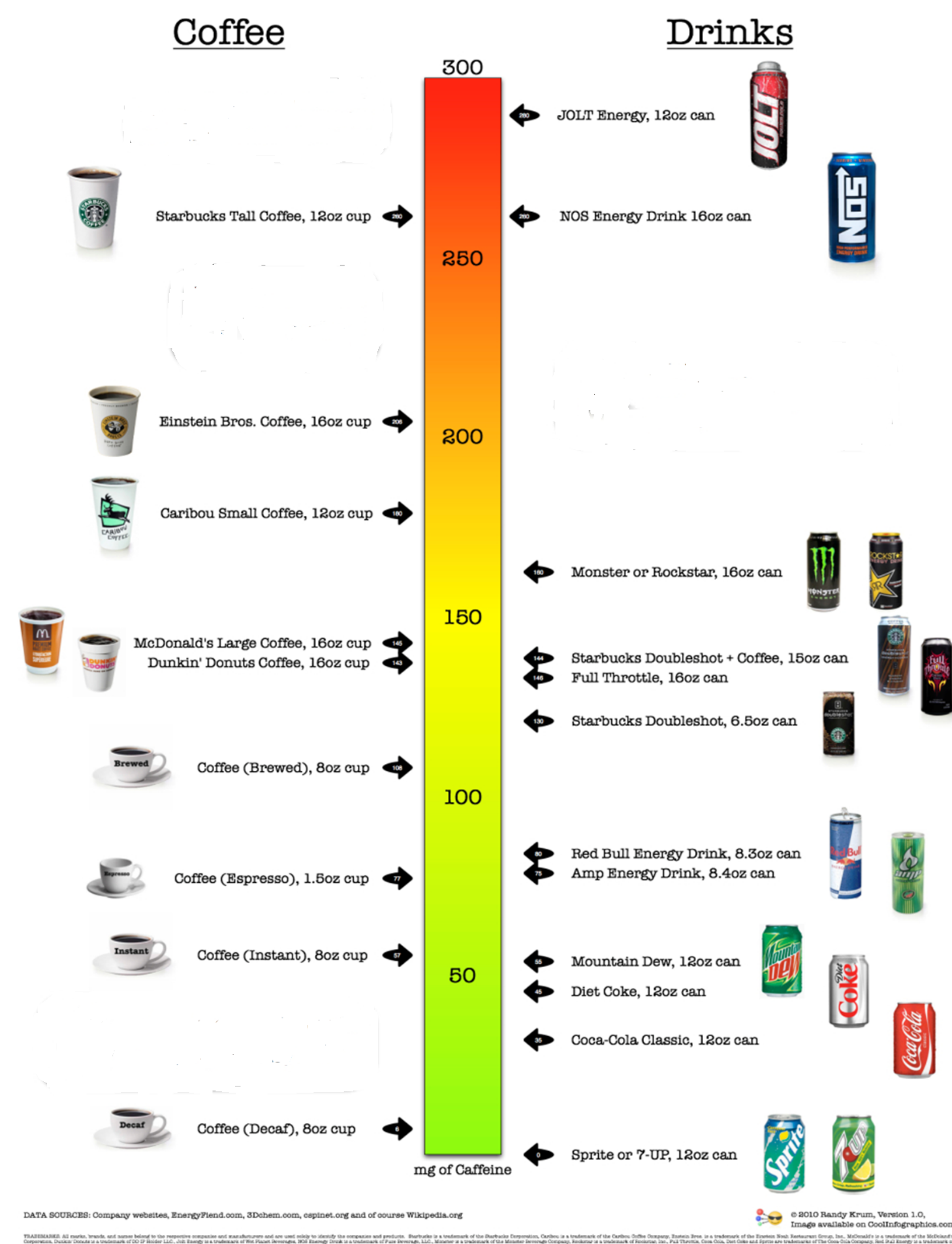
The awareness among consumers about the caffeine content of different sources is limited.

Discussion and Conclusions:

Mean intake across all age groups is in line with recommendations of EFSA and Health Canada, and total daily caffeine intake over the past decade remained stable.

Implications for Practice or Policy:

Efforts to better inform consumers about their daily caffeine consumption would benefit from labelling of caffeine levels in coffee, tea and carbonated soft drinks, since together these beverages contribute to more than 90% of total daily caffeine consumption.



Age group	Total daily caffeine intake
Toddlers (12-<36 months, N=4.103)	0.3-30.3 mg (0.0-2.1 mg/kg bw)
Other children (3-<10 years old, N=8.755)	3.5-47.1 mg (0.2-2.0 mg/kg bw)
Adolescents (10-<18 years old, N=8.709)	17.6-69.5 mg (0.4-1.4 mg/kg bw)
Adults (10-<65 year olds, N=31.818)	36.5-319.4 mg (0.5-4.3 mg/kg bw)
Elderly (65-<75 years old, N=5.119)	22.6-362.1 mg (0.3-4.8 mg/kg bw)
Very elderly (≥75 years old, N=2.381)	21.8-416.8 mg (0.3-6.0 mg/kg bw)

Table 1. Total daily caffeine intake (minimum – maximum)

The database contains data from 39 surveys in 22 European countries covering 66,531 participants, conducted between 2005 and 2012.

Source: EFSA Scientific Opinion on the Safety of Caffeine, available at: <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/publications/efsajournal.htm>

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