

Tea seen as healthier than water

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British researchers say consuming tea is healthier than drinking water not only for hydration but for other benefits.

They recommend drinking three or more cups of tea a day, the BBC reports.

The findings by health nutritionist Dr. Carrie Ruxton and colleagues at Kings College London appears in the European Journal of Clinical Nutrition.

The BBC report said the study helps dispel the popular notion tea dehydrates. It said tea not only re-hydrates as well as water, but claimed it also protects against heart disease because of its health-promoting flavonoids, which helps prevent cell damage.

Ruxton said tea replaces fluids and also contains antioxidants.

"Studies on caffeine have found very high doses dehydrate and everyone assumes that caffeine-containing beverages dehydrate. But even if you had a really, really strong cup of tea or coffee, which is quite hard to make, you would still have a net gain of fluid," she said. "Also, a cup of tea contains fluoride, which is good for the teeth."

The BBC report said the Tea Council provided funding for the work, but Ruxton said the study was independent.

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