

# Caffeine may prevent heart disease death in elderly

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Habitual intake of caffeinated beverages provides protection against heart disease mortality in the elderly, say researchers at SUNY Downstate Medical Center and Brooklyn College.

Using data from the first federal National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey Epidemiologic Follow-up Study, the researchers found that survey participants 65 or more years old with higher caffeinated beverage intake exhibited lower relative risk of coronary vascular disease and heart mortality than did participants with lower caffeinated beverage intake.

John Kassotis, MD, associate professor of medicine at SUNY Downstate, said, "The protection against death from heart disease in the elderly afforded by caffeine is likely due to caffeine's enhancement of blood pressure."

The protective effect also was found to be dose-responsive: the higher the caffeine intake the stronger the protection. The protective effect was found only in participants who were not severely hypertensive. No significant protective effect was in patients below the age of 65.

No protective effect was found against cerebrovascular disease mortality – death from stroke – regardless of age.

Source: SUNY Downstate Medical Center

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