

TEA TIME

PART II

6 herbal
teas and
their
benefits

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While relaxing with a hot tea encourages us to slow down, unwind, and reset from our day, an incredible added benefit is its health-boosting properties. Let's explore some.



Chamomile Tea

Chamomile is an herb from the plant family that includes daisies and sunflowers. This beautiful plant can even grow up to three feet high. Most commonly known for its calming effects, chamomile tea is often a drink of choice before bedtime. Additional research suggests that chamomile may contain antibacterial properties as well as anti-inflammatory and liver-protecting effects.



Peppermint Tea

Peppermint tea is famously used to help ease gastrointestinal symptoms, including indigestion, stomach pain, and nausea. Further possible benefits of peppermint tea are its antioxidant, antibacterial, antiviral and anticancer properties, which may be due to menthone, limonene, and menthol compounds within the peppermint leaves. On a practical level, studies have also shown that peppermint tea helps freshen one's breath and alleviate tension headaches.



Ginger Tea

A common go-to for those experiencing morning sickness, ginger tea is popularly used as a solution for nausea and other digestion discomforts. There is evidence that thanks to its gingerol component, ginger may help with indigestion and prevent stomach ulcers as well.



Hibiscus Tea

Of the hundreds of species of hibiscus, the most popular one for tea is *Hibiscus sabdariffa*. One of the notable benefits of this herbal tea is its impact on heart health. Many studies have shown that hibiscus tea may lower blood pressure, while others have found that this tea can decrease LDL (bad) cholesterol and triglyceride levels. However, as always, it is recommended to speak with your doctor first as it may interact with other medications (such as diuretics).



Turmeric Tea

Curcumin is the main ingredient within turmeric, and this component has strong anti-inflammatory effects. Additional benefits of this beautiful golden tea may include relief of joint pain/arthritis, more regulated blood sugar levels, liver protection, and improved immune function.



Dandelion Tea

Perhaps less popular than the previous teas on the list, dandelion tea has a plethora of health benefits. However, due to the potency of its ingredients, be sure to consult your physician first to make sure this drink is appropriate for you. Women who are pregnant or nursing should avoid dandelion tea. This tea is rich in vitamin A, which is helpful for the eyes, and vitamin K, which is a key component for maintaining bone health. It may also contain diuretic properties, which is why it is often associated with and marketed as a “detox” tea.

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Micronutrient Deficiencies May Affect the Outcome of IBD Patients

The world of gastrointestinal conditions is vast and complicated, with many different components. Individuals with irritable bowel disease (IBD) and other gastrointestinal conditions may be at greater risk of micronutrient deficiencies because of the often-decreased ability to properly digest food and absorb micronutrients.

According to research, a focus on preventing selenium and zinc deficiencies—particularly within IBD patients—may help improve outcomes and minimize the complications that can arise from micronutrient deficiencies.

A study analyzed the relationship between each micronutrient and markers of disease activity/clinical outcomes. Investigators in the United Kingdom who were part of the Department of Gastroenterology at Queen Elizabeth University Hospital collected clinical data from the records of 216 patients with IBD. The most common deficiencies within the analyzed cohort included vitamin C, ferritin, folate, and zinc.

Ultimately, the researchers suggest that zinc and selenium supplementation may be used to improve disease outcomes; specifically, zinc for Crohn’s disease, and selenium for ulcerative colitis.

Drinking Fermented Tea May Help with Blood Sugar Control

The gut microbiome has become a very popular area of study: research has shown that the gut microbiome affects the body in many ways, including food digestion, the immune system, the central nervous system, and mood. A recent study suggests that there may also be a connection between the gut microbiome and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) symptoms.

After analyzing a group of 191 women, researchers found that individuals who had less adherence to a Mediterranean diet pattern also had higher PTSD symptom levels. Specific species within the microbiome that were noted as being helpful were *Eubacterium eligens* and *Akkermansia muciniphila*.

A typical Mediterranean diet pattern includes a variety of fruits, vegetables, legumes, nuts, and whole grains, in addition to moderate amounts of dairy, poultry, eggs, and fish. Moreover, a few of the better known benefits of the Mediterranean diet include increased heart health, cognitive function, and healthy aging.

While more research is needed to further study the potential connection between this diet and PTSD symptoms, there is a lot to gain by following the Mediterranean diet and improving one's gut microbiome. ♥



SILAN MUFFINS WITH PECAN CRUMB TOPPING

BY SINA MIZRAHI | YIELDS 10 STANDARD SIZE MUFFINS

I love the earthiness silan adds to these deliciously moist not-too-sweet muffins. Don't skip the crumb topping, it adds that perfect sweet nuttiness and texture. Enjoy with a steaming cup of tea or coffee and you have the perfect pick-me-up.

INGREDIENTS FOR TOPPING

- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup all purpose flour
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup chopped roasted pecans
- 1 tablespoon Heaven & Earth Date Syrup (silan)
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup oil

INGREDIENTS FOR MUFFINS

- 2 XL eggs
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup neutral-flavored oil
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup Heaven & Earth Date Syrup (silan)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup brown sugar
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup applesauce
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup non-dairy milk, orange juice, or water
- 2 cups all purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon (or pumpkin spice mix)
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon salt

DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 425°F. Spray a muffin pan with nonstick spray or line with muffin liners.
2. Make the crumb topping. In a medium bowl, combine flour, pecans, brown sugar, silan, and cinnamon. Add oil and massage until crumbly. Do not overmix.
3. Make the muffins. In a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat eggs. Add oil, silan, sugar, applesauce, and milk. Mix on low speed until emulsified. Add flour, cinnamon, baking powder, baking soda, and salt. Beat until no streaks of flour remain.
4. Spoon batter into pan's cavities, filling all the way up. Top generously with crumb mixture. Transfer pan to the middle rack and bake for five minutes at 425°F. Reduce heat to 350°F and bake an additional 15 to 18 minutes. Cool over a cooling rack. Enjoy with a steaming cup of tea or coffee.

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