

# Coffee linked to lower risk of death

By Amina Khan, Los Angeles Times

Researchers have some reassuring news for the legions of coffee drinkers who can't get through the day without a latte, cappuccino, iced mocha, double-shot of espresso or a plain old cuppa joe: That coffee habit may help you live longer.

A new study that tracked the health and coffee consumption of more than 400,000 older adults for nearly 14 years found that java drinkers were less likely to die during the study than their counterparts who eschewed the brew. In fact, men and women who averaged four or five cups of coffee per day had the lowest risk of death, according to a report in Thursday's edition of the New England Journal of Medicine.

The research doesn't prove that coffee deserves the credit for helping people live longer. But it is the largest analysis to date to suggest that the beverage's reputation for being a liquid vice may be undeserved.

"There's been concerns for a long time that coffee might be a risky behavior," said study leader Neal Freedman, an epidemiologist with the National Cancer Institute who drinks coffee "here and there." "The results offer some reassurance that it's not a risk factor for future disease."

Coffee originated in Ethiopia more than 500 years ago. As it spread through the Middle East, Europe and the Americas, its popularity was tempered by concerns about its supposed ill effects. A 1674 petition by aggrieved women in London complained that coffee left men impotent, "with nothing moist but their snotty noses, nothing stiff but their joints, nor standing but their ears," according to the book "Uncommon Grounds: The History of Coffee and How It Transformed Our

World.”

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