VIEWS | OPINION

Have green tea if you have type 2 diabetes

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By now you must have realized how green tea does wonders to your body. We already know how drinking green tea regularly can be beneficial for maintaining a healthy heart, slowing down the growth of cancerous cells and reducing the extra flab. But, does the hot beverage also have a medicinal advantage for those who are suffering from type 2 diabetes? Proves out, it has

What does science say about this?

Type 2 diabetes—the most common form of diabetes—is caused by several factors, including lifestyle factors and genes. One is more likely to develop type 2 diabetes, if the individual isn't physically active and is overweight or obese. Extra weight sometimes causes insulin resistance and is common in people with type 2 diabetes. So, in such case, green tea helps to reduce weight and this is how people with type 2 diabetes get their blood sugar under check. Even Sandra Arevalo, MPH, RDN, a certified diabetes educator and spokesperson for the American Association of Diabetes Educators, has said, "When you lose weight, you increase your insulin sensitivity and will have a lower blood sugar level."

Researchers have also found that drinking 4 cups per day was linked to weight loss and lower blood pressure. The catechins, a type of antioxidant, present in green tea help to reduce the effects of insulin resistance by decreasing the digestion and absorption of carbohydrates.

In addition, stress can be a major barrier to manage glucose control. Therefore, when you're under physical stress, your blood sugar can also increase. This can happen when you're sick or injured and it affects people with type 1 or type 2 diabetes. In such scenario, green tea which contains amino acid L-theanine helps to calm down the mind and body thereby relieving stress.

But we would like to clearly state that, green tea alone is unlikely to control blood sugar and cholesterol levels. One also needs to eat a balanced diet, which is low in added

sugars, simple carbohydrates and saturated fat.

How you should take your green tea?

There is hardly any negative impact of green tea on your body. But one should keep a check on the right quantity of green tea. Generally, when people take dip green tea or powder green tea, the right quantity and desired therapeutic benefit often get lost. So, we would suggest for opting green tea films, where the loss of therapeutic benefit and quantity is negligible.

When drinking green tea, the other thing to keep in mind is caffeine, which can affect blood sugar and blood pressure. The latter is of particular concern for people with type 2 diabetes, who are 2 to 4 times as likely to die of heart disease compared with people without type 2 diabetes, according to the American Heart Association.

The best way to monitor how you respond to the amount of caffeine in green tea is to check your blood sugar before drinking the tea and then one to two hours afterward. If you're still in your target range before and after, you haven't hit your limit. If you are sensitive to caffeine, herbal teas can be a great substitute. They don't contain caffeine and are also rich with flavor.

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