

It's Tea Time!

By: Lauren Cooper

Pour some tea for me, please! There is nothing like a warm cup of tea and a blanket to start off the fall season. Tea has been used for centuries and most tea types vary in production depending on the leaf. Black, Green and Oolong tea all originate from leaves of the tea plant called *Camellia Sinensis*, and has been praised for enhancing the mind and promoting wakefulness. However, Herbal teas are not made from the same plant but rather from roots, leaves, flowers and other components from a variety of plants.

During the early days tea leaves were dried and then made into cakes which were then roasted and then ground. Drying of the leaves made it easy for storage which was then steeped in boiling water in a teapot, hence loose-leaf tea. Did you know that tea also provides several health benefits?



- Provides hydration
- High in polyphenols, which are antioxidants that help combat cell damage
- Tea Flavonoids may reduce the risk of certain cancers
- Caffeinated and Herbal teas can provide small amounts of potassium, magnesium or zinc
- Black and Green tea can support weight management and heart health

According to the *Complete Food & Nutrition Guide* it is important to be mindful when drinking herbal teas as some may interfere with over-the-counter or prescription medication. Bottled or canned iced tea drinks have added sugars which may lead to added calories. Read labels when making your selection and if you are looking for sweetness you might look for teas with low-calorie sweeteners.

Let's take a look at some basic and herbal tea options you can find at the store:

Basic Teas -

- Black
- Oolong
- Green

Herbal Teas -

- Chamomile
- Ginger
- Peppermint

Today, there are a variety of tea brand options to choose from and if you don't find one that grabs your attention, create our own healthy tea or warm drink. Here are some ideas that may peak your interest:

Warm Drinks -

- Hot water & lemon
- Hot Apple Cider & Cinnamon
- Coconut Pumpkin Latte

Find your flavor this season and remember to enjoy the warmth tea brings. I know I will, here is a drink to your health!

To learn more tips on how to eat healthy, seasonal food items and save money, consider attending a local EFNEP (Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program) series program. This eight-hour free course helps families learn basic nutrition, food preparation, food budget management and food safety in informal, convenient locations throughout the county.

For information regarding free classes contact:

Lauren Cooper
EFNEP Nutrition Assistant
K-State Research and Extension
Wyandotte County
1216 N.79th Street
Kansas City, KS 66112
(913) 299-9300 ext.121
lacooper@ksu.edu



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<https://www.eatright.org/health/wellness/preventing-illness/the-health-benefits-of-tea>

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