



## DIETARY SUPPLEMENT FACT SHEET

<http://chppm-www.apgea.army.mil/dhpw/Wellness.aspx>

### Green Tea (*Camilia sinensis*)

**Historical Perspective:** Green tea is a part of Japanese and Chinese cultures. It is used to treat a variety of maladies, to include dizziness, headache and indigestion.

**Common Uses:** Green tea is claimed to help in the prevention of atherosclerosis (hardening of the arteries), cancer, and high cholesterol. It is also promoted as an antibacterial agent, astringent, diuretic, radioprotective agent and a stimulant.

**Form(s) Used:** Green tea is usually “taken” in the tea form; however, there are capsules of green tea as well.

**Common and/or Recommended Dosage:** Green tea is usually consumed by drinking, although capsules are available. Six to ten cups a day is the recommended dose for therapeutic effects.

**Potential Side Effects:** Allergic reactions may occur for those with green tea asthma. Green tea does have caffeine, so large amounts may cause restlessness, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea or constipation, heart palpitations and headache. For those with a sensitive stomach, green tea may cause stomach irritation and poor appetite.

**Food-Drug-Supplement Interactions:** Green tea is a good source of vitamin K, so anyone taking Coumadin or Warfarin (blood thinners) should consult a health care provider; vitamin K antagonizes the effect of these medications. Green tea also interacts with Doxorubicin and alkaline medications (consult your health care provider). If green tea is consumed with milk, the antioxidant effects may be diminished. Green tea extract may interfere with iron absorption.

**Contraindication to Use:** Green tea should be used cautiously by those who have a weak heart, kidney disease, an overactive thyroid, a susceptibility to spasms or prone to anxiety or panic attacks. In addition, because caffeine should be restricted during pregnancy and breastfeeding, consumption of green tea during these times should be moderate.

**Research Data on Safety and Efficacy:** Green tea has antioxidant properties, which is one of the ways that green tea may be protective of heart disease. Other studies show that consuming green tea may also be helpful for reducing the risk for some forms of cancer. Research continues in both of these areas. Studies testing green tea’s antibacterial properties are also promising, but not yet conclusive.

**Bottom-Line:** Green tea is safe for consumption for healthy adults. However, it should be avoided if any of the conditions mentioned above are present.

#### References:

1. Professional’s Handbook of Complementary and Alternative Medicines. C.W. Fetrow, Pharm D, Juan R. Avila, Pharm D, Springhouse, 2001.
2. The Health Professional’s Guide to Popular Dietary Supplements, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. Allison Sarubin Fragakis, MS, RD, The American Dietetic Association, 2003.