Transcript

INTRODUCTION

00:00   Welcome back to the English with Rhys podcast. It has been a while since the last episode—about 10 months, in fact. Unfortunately, I've been very busy. I actually love making the podcast, but I haven't found the time. But I am back, and I'm glad to be back! Today, I'm bringing a very interesting topic to the table.

If you don't know who I am, my name is Rhys. I'm a master's-level English teacher from the UK, and I'm here to help you level up your English.

So, what is today's topic? Well, it actually comes in the form of a question: is coffee good for you? You might already have an idea, but the truth is this is quite a controversial question. That means there are people on both sides; people

01:00   disagree a lot about this topic, and maybe they fight or argue a lot too.

So yes, there is no easy answer. There's a lot of information about why it's good and a lot of information about why it's bad. And actually, maybe it's not even that easy. Maybe it depends on you and your body.

So, we're going to look at what the experts are saying and try to make sense of this. And while doing so, we're going to learn some English. We're going to learn some vocabulary for talking about coffee and similar habits, and some vocabulary about health, diseases, and illnesses too.

After that, we'll also check out some interesting grammar that you might see often but you've never really noticed before. That'll help you to use it a lot in your own life.

02:00 So as always, for my Serious and Dedicated Members, you can practice the grammar and vocabulary from this podcast in The Podcast Course. If you don't know what that is, don't worry. There's a link in the description where you'll also find the free transcript, so you can read along as you listen. Or if you're watching this as a video, you can just click the subtitles button.

MAIN PART

Before I start talking about coffee, I think it's important that we understand some of the key vocabulary.

Okay, so the first word is caffeine. Caffeine. Okay, that's C-A-F-F-E-I-N-E. Okay, a weird spelling—caffeine. Caffeine is something that we find in coffee, tea, and maybe energy drinks, and it keeps you more awake. Caffeine.

03:00

Then we have stimulant. Stimulant. S-T-I-M-U-L-A-N-T. Stimulant. That is a type of substance that increases your energy and alertness—something you put inside you to make you have more energy and be more awake. Stimulant.

Next word is benefit. Benefit. B-E-N-E-F-I-T. A benefit is an advantage or a positive effect that something gives you. Okay, so the benefit of working is that you get paid. The benefit of drinking coffee maybe is that you're more awake.

04:00   Our next word is boost. Boost. B-O-O-S-T. Boost. That's to increase or improve something. You can imagine if you're running, suddenly you have a little boost and you go even faster. Boost.

Depend. Depend. D-E-P-E-N-D. Depend. That's to rely on something or need something regularly. I depend on air, water, and sleep to keep me alive, but we can depend on other things too.

Alright, I'm going to read the script now. It's going to take about 5 minutes or so, and I want you to listen out for those words. Here we go.

05:00   Is coffee good or bad for you? With millions of cups drunk every day around the world, coffee is a big part of our lives. But what does it do to our health? We'll look at the good and bad sides of drinking coffee to help you decide about your coffee habits.

So, let's start with the good news. Coffee has several health benefits that might surprise you.

First, coffee drinkers might live longer. Studies show that people who drink coffee every day have a lower risk of dying from some major diseases like heart disease, stroke, diabetes, and kidney disease.

Coffee can also help your body manage sugar better, which can reduce the risk of getting type 2 diabetes.

06:00   Drinking one or two cups a day may lower the risk of heart failure, and it's linked to a lower chance of developing Parkinson's disease and better control of its symptoms too.

Your liver will also benefit from coffee. Both regular and decaf coffee can help keep your liver enzymes at healthy levels.

Dark roast coffee can reduce DNA damage, which lowers the risk of cancer, and coffee drinkers are also less likely to develop colon cancer.

The caffeine in coffee may protect against Alzheimer's disease, and drinking two to three cups can lower the risk of developing dementia in older adults, especially women.

Finally, coffee can help prevent strokes. Drinking at least a cup a day is linked to a lower risk of stroke, which is a major cause of death.

07:00   But unfortunately, coffee isn't all good news. There are some bad sides, especially when you drink too much.

So, caffeine is a stimulant, and too much can make you anxious, nervous, or jittery.

It increases alertness by blocking adenosine, a chemical that makes you feel tired, but it can also cause insomnia if you drink it later in the day. To avoid sleep problems, it's best to stop drinking caffeine by early afternoon.

Coffee can also act as a laxative, leading to loose stools or even diarrhoea in some people.

It might also worsen symptoms of GERD, causing stomach discomfort.

08:00 Very high caffeine intake can cause a serious condition called rhabdomyolysis, where damaged muscle fibres enter the bloodstream and harm the kidneys. It's a good idea to keep your daily caffeine intake below 400 mg.

Caffeine can be habit-forming. While not a true addiction, it can lead to dependency, especially with high daily consumption.

It can also raise blood pressure temporarily, which is risky for those with already high blood pressure. Additionally, high doses of caffeine can cause your heart to beat faster or become irregular. If this happens, you should cut back.

While coffee gives a temporary energy boost, it can lead to rebound fatigue once the effects wear off, which leaves you more tired.

09:00 Caffeine is also a diuretic, meaning it increases urination, which can be inconvenient and might even lead to incontinence in some people.

So, is coffee good or bad for you? Unfortunately, the answer isn't so simple. Coffee has many health benefits, from helping you to live longer to protecting against diseases like Parkinson's or Alzheimer's.

But it's important to drink it in moderation to avoid any negative effects like anxiety, insomnia, and high blood pressure. For most people, drinking three to five cups a day is safe and can be part of a healthy lifestyle. Just pay attention to your body's response and adjust your intake if needed.

Remember, the healthiest coffee habit includes a balanced diet, regular exercise, and good sleep.

So, let's look at those words again: caffeine, stimulant, benefit, boost, and depend.

10:00   "The caffeine in coffee may protect against Alzheimer's disease".

So, caffeine is the name of a drug that keeps you awake. It's a stimulant.

"Caffeine is a stimulant".

A stimulant is a kind of substance that increases your energy and keeps you awake.

Then we had benefit.

"Coffee has several health benefits that might surprise you".

So, benefits are the good points, the things you can get that are good.

After that, it was boost.

"While coffee gives a temporary energy boost, it can lead to rebound fatigue".

So, that means some kind of increase. Here, it was an energy boost that we get from the caffeine.

And our last word was depend.

"While not a true addiction, it can lead to dependency".

11:00 To depend means to rely on something or need something again and again. So, I, for example, depend on coffee every morning. I can't imagine living a day without coffee.

So that's five words that we use fairly often in everyday English. Now, I want to give you five more words so that you can describe illnesses and diseases.

Our first one is diabetes. Diabetes. D-I-A-B-E-T-E-S. Diabetes. Diabetes is a disease that affects how your body uses sugar.

12:00 Our next word is cancer. Cancer. C-A-N-C-E-R. Cancer. Cancer is a serious disease where the cells in your body grow uncontrollably. So, your cells grow too much, and they are damaged in some way. Cancer.

The next word is insomnia. Insomnia. I-N-S-O-M-N-I-A. Insomnia. Insomnia means you have difficulty sleeping or staying asleep. Insomnia.

The next word is diarrhoea. Diarrhoea. D-I-A-R-R-H-O-E-A. Diarrhoea. That's the British spelling. Diarrhoea is frequent and loose bowel movements. Okay, so

13:00   that's the most polite way we can say it. Really, what it means is going to the bathroom to poop often, and the poop is very loose. It comes out far too easily; there is a lot of water in there. Diarrhoea.

And the last word is stroke. Stroke. S-T-R-O-K-E. Stroke. A stroke is a sudden problem in the brain that causes some damage, and it affects your movement and your speech. Stroke.

Okay, I'm going to talk about coffee and caffeine again, and I want you to listen out for these five illnesses and diseases. Here we go.

Is coffee good or bad for you? With millions of cups drunk every day around the

14:00   world, coffee is a big part of our lives. But what does it do to our health? We'll look at the good and bad sides of drinking coffee to help you decide about your coffee habits.

So, let's start with the good news. Coffee has several health benefits that might surprise you.

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Coffee can also help your body manage sugar better, which can reduce the risk of getting type 2 diabetes.

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Your liver will also benefit from coffee. Both regular and decaf coffee can help keep your liver enzymes at healthy levels.

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16:00   But unfortunately, coffee isn't all good news. There are some bad sides, especially when you drink too much.

So, caffeine is a stimulant, and too much can make you anxious, nervous, or jittery.

It increases alertness by blocking adenosine, a chemical that makes you feel tired, but it can also cause insomnia if you drink it later in the day. To avoid sleep problems, it's best to stop drinking caffeine by early afternoon.

Coffee can also act as a laxative, leading to loose stools or even diarrhoea in some people.

It might also worsen symptoms of GERD, causing stomach discomfort.

17:00 Very high caffeine intake can cause a serious condition called rhabdomyolysis, where damaged muscle fibres enter the bloodstream and harm the kidneys. It's a good idea to keep your daily caffeine intake below 400 mg.

Caffeine can be habit-forming. While not a true addiction, it can lead to dependency, especially with high daily consumption.

It can also raise blood pressure temporarily, which is risky for those with already high blood pressure. Additionally, high doses of caffeine can cause your heart to beat faster or become irregular. If this happens, you should cut back.

While coffee gives a temporary energy boost, it can lead to rebound fatigue once the effects wear off, which leaves you more tired.

Caffeine is also a diuretic, meaning it increases urination, which can be inconvenient and might even lead to incontinence in some people.

18:00 So, is coffee good or bad for you? Unfortunately, the answer isn't so simple. Coffee has many health benefits, from helping you to live longer to protecting against diseases like Parkinson's or Alzheimer's.

But it's important to drink it in moderation to avoid any negative effects like anxiety, insomnia, and high blood pressure. For most people, drinking three to five cups a day is safe and can be part of a healthy lifestyle. Just pay attention to your body's response and adjust your intake if needed.

Remember, the healthiest coffee habit includes a balanced diet, regular exercise, and good sleep.

Okay, so let's look at those medical words in more context.

First, diabetes.

"Coffee can also help your body manage sugar better, which can reduce the risk of getting type 2 diabetes".

19:00 Remember, diabetes is a disease that affects how your body uses sugar.

Then, cancer.

"Dark roast coffee can reduce DNA damage, which lowers the risk of cancer".

Cancer is a serious disease where your cells grow uncontrollably.

Insomnia.

"It can also cause insomnia if you drink it later in the day".

Insomnia is difficulty in going to sleep and staying asleep.

Diarrhoea.

"Coffee can also act as a laxative, leading to loose stools or even diarrhoea in some people".

Diarrhoea is going to the bathroom often, and your stools, or your poop, is very loose or wet."

Stroke.

"Drinking at least a cup a day is linked to a lower risk of stroke".

20:00   Stroke is a sudden problem in the brain which affects how you move and your speech.

Let's talk about the grammar now. I have two advanced grammar points that I'd like to share with you, starting with relative clauses.

When I spoke about coffee, I said that, "Studies show that people who drink coffee every day have a lower risk of dying from some major diseases".

So, the relative clause in there is "who drink coffee every day."

Okay, so I could have just said "people", but I wanted to give some more information. Instead of just "people", I said "people who drink coffee every day".

By adding that bit of extra information, I describe the group in a more specific and correct way.

That part, "who drink coffee every day", is a relative clause.

21:00 If you wanted to talk about me, you might say, "Rhys, an English teacher online, went to the shop yesterday".

Or, "Those people who won't stop talking are really annoying me".

Just adding that bit of information easily into the sentence can help you be more specific with what you want to say.

The next bit of grammar is called a concessive clause. Concessive.

Here's the example, "But coffee isn't all good news; there are some bad sides, especially when you drink too much".

The concessive clause is "especially when you drink too much." So, what does that mean?

I'm using "especially" to say that this is truer, or more true, when you drink too much. There are bad sides if you drink even a little bit of coffee, but it's more true when you drink a lot. Notice that it kind of changes the meaning of the sentence.

22:00 So, here's the sentence again with no concessive clause.

"But coffee isn't all good news; there are some bad sides". Okay, so the listener might think, "Okay, there are good sides and there are bad sides, and they are about the same, they're about equal".

That's not what I'm trying to say. Adding "especially when you drink too much" tells the listener that that is more true when you drink too much.

IN CONCLUSION

So, you should have some good vocabulary now about coffee and about certain diseases and illnesses.

I thought I would take a moment to talk to you about my own experience with coffee. In fact, I have been drinking coffee the whole time I've been recording!

23:00   I drink coffee every day, and in fact, I think I probably drink too much of it. I have coffee as my first drink of the day, and I probably stop drinking it around 2pm, which is later than the advice I gave today. I'm not sure why I do that. I think that it does wake me up a bit in the morning; it helps me use the bathroom in the morning. But then I just keep going with it, and it's only after lunch when I brush my teeth that I stop because the coffee would taste bad after brushing my teeth.

Now, I think there are some positive sides, and looking at what the experts say, like I spoke about today, there are a lot of good sides. So, I don't want to take coffee out of my life totally, but reducing it could be good.

24:00   I do notice some negative points, like with anxiety. I notice that when I drink extra caffeine, I feel more anxiety, I feel more anxious, and that really disrupts my day. It makes me feel bad; it disrupts my work. I probably get less done. But at the same time, I guess I'm in a habit of drinking it.

So, what about you? Do you drink coffee every day? Do you notice any benefits or side effects, like negative points? Or maybe you don't drink coffee. Could you tell us why you don't drink coffee in the comment section? Maybe you could let us know. We could have a bit of a discussion there, and I'll even check your English for you.

Okay, so I'm going to go back over the vocabulary one more time in just a moment, but before I do that, if you're not already doing so, then you should follow me or subscribe to me wherever you're listening or watching this podcast.

25:00   That extra support helps me to keep making these. I really love to make the podcast, and I want to do it more, but I do need those numbers to help me justify it.

I only have so many hours in the day, so I need to work on what more people are going to use if I want to help as many people as possible speak English better.

If you are a Dedicated Member or a Serious Member, then you have access to the podcast course, so you can take this podcast and then do activities like questions based on the vocabulary and the grammar today. Links to that are in the description.

If you are not already a member, you can check it out and see what the perks are there.

26:00 Okay, let's go through the key words from today's lesson. So firstly, I talked about caffeine. Copy me: caffeine, caffeine, caffeine. Caffeine is a substance found in coffee, tea, and some other drinks that makes you feel more awake. Example: "I need a cup of coffee in the morning because it contains caffeine which helps me wake up".

Next, we have stimulant. Stimulant. A stimulant is a type of substance that increases your energy and alertness. Example: "Caffeine is a stimulant that helps you stay awake and focused".

The next word is benefit. Benefit. A benefit is an advantage or a positive effect that something gives you. For example: "One benefit of drinking coffee is that it can help you stay more alert".

27:00 Next, we have boost. Boost. To boost means to increase or improve something. For example: "A cup of coffee can give you a quick boost of energy".

Next, depend. Depend. To depend means to rely on something or to need it often, again and again. For example: "If you drink coffee every day, you might depend on it to feel awake". I know I do.

Diabetes. Diabetes. Diabetes is a disease that affects how your body uses sugar. For example: "People with diabetes need to manage their sugar intake to stay healthy".

28:00   Next, we have cancer. Cancer. Cancer is a serious disease where the cells in the body grow uncontrollably. For example: "Doctors say that smoking can increase the risk of getting cancer".

Insomnia. Insomnia. Insomnia is difficulty falling asleep and staying asleep too. For example: "Drinking coffee late in the day can cause insomnia and make it hard to fall asleep".

Diarrhoea. Diarrhoea. Diarrhoea is frequent and loose bowel movements, going to the bathroom often, and your poops are very easy and quick to come out, perhaps with a lot of water. For example: "Eating spicy food can sometimes cause diarrhoea".

29:00   And the last word is stroke. Stroke. Stroke is a sudden problem in the brain that can cause damage and affect movement or speech. Here's an example: "A stroke can happen if blood flow to the brain is blocked or reduced".

Okay, so I've been Rhys from englishwithrhys.com. Today, my research came from DrugAware Australia, Johns Hopkins Medicine, Healthline, and the BBC.

And I'd love to give a big shout-out to my dedicated learners: Alexandra, Alina, and Bangoer. Thank you so much for your support!