



The Importance of Tea for Human & Avian Health

Jason J. Crean

(Cited from avian veterinarian Karen Becker, DVM, NMD)



Types of teas

- Green
- Black
- Herbal

Tea plant: *Camellia sinensis*

- Small, evergreen shrub
- Habitat: primarily grown in Japan, China
- The harvested leaves produce green, black, oolong and white teas
- Variance in flavors due to processing

What's the difference?

- Green: young leaves picked and dried quickly, minimally oxidized then fired
- Black: complete oxidation of the mature leaf prior to firing
- Oolong: leaves are rolled after harvesting, allowing the volatile oils to react with air. Very slow oxidation prior to firing
- White: picked before the leaf buds have opened (buds are covered with short, white hairs), leaves are steamed and dried quickly

Green Tea Health Benefits:

- Polyphenols (potent antioxidants):
 - Scavenge free radicals (20-30 times the potency of vitamin E)
 - Vitamin C: strengthens immune system
 - Lowers LDL cholesterol
 - Increases HDL cholesterol
 - Reduces blood pressure
 - Nutrients: carotene, B1, B2, B6. Folic Acid, Manganese, potassium

Black Tea Health Benefits:

- Antioxidants keep blood vessels supple, promote healthy blood flow
- Flavonoids reduce incidence of atherosclerosis (narrowing of arteries)
- Tannins: Chelate heavy metals (lead and iron)



Caffeine

- Green, black, oolong and white teas must be decaffeinated for birds
- Purchase teas that are decaffeinated by water and carbon dioxide (to retain the polyphenols) NOT ethyl acetate
- Herbal teas are naturally caffeine-free

Herbal Teas:

Chamomile:

- Significant increases in urinary hippurate (a breakdown product of polyphenols) which has antibiotic properties
- Increases in urinary glycine, an amino acid that has been shown to relieve muscle spasms
- Contains nerve relaxants (acts like a natural calmativ/sedative)
- Beneficial for insomnia (and nightmares), pain, stress, hyperactivity, anxiety
- Digestive tonic, IBD

Red Rose & Rose hips

- Natural source of vitamin C and bioflavonoids. Potent blood, liver and kidney tonic. Use for fatigue, recovery from illness

Hibiscus

- Natural source of vitamin C which boosts immune system
- Helps the body to expel toxins, and is often used to lower blood pressure and cholesterol
- Helpful with liver problems, weight loss, digestive issues, and inflammation
- Positive effect on the central nervous system and can help to control moods and depression

Peppermint

- G.I. upset, antiseptic properties, anti-viral

Anise seed (parsley family)

- Aids digestion, soothes cough, bronchitis
- Shikimic acid, found in the seed pod, is an active compound in Tamiflu due to its antiviral properties

- Raspberry Leaf
 - Rich in calcium, magnesium
 - Considered a "female" tonic, good for fertility issues and helping hormonal balance
- Red Clover
 - Respiratory irritations
 - Blood tonic
 - Skin and feather issues (anti-inflammatory)
 - Valuable source of calcium, chromium, magnesium, niacin, phosphorus, potassium, thiamine, and vitamin C.
- Rooibos ("Red" tea)
 - Grown high in the mountains of South Africa
 - Mineral rich (low tannins) and high in antioxidants
 - Contains natural anti-spasmodics (helps with colic, indigestion, muscle fatigue)
 - Rich in flavonoids, especially aspalathin, which is anti-allergenic, anti-inflammatory
 - Anti-mutagenic components and abundant oligosaccharides that are anti-viral
- Calendula
 - Aids in stomach upset and ulcers
 - Anti-inflammatory for skin and GI tract
 - Contains calendulin, carotenoids, sterols, and volatile oils.
- Lavender
 - Helps ease insomnia (relaxant)
 - Aids respiratory issues
 - Kidney tonic
 - Contains flavonoids, tannins, coumarins, and essential oil containing camphor, geraniol and linalool.
- Dandelion leaf
 - Detoxification agent for liver and gall bladder
 - Kidney tonic – quick removal of toxins
 - Aids digestion, supports joints, skin issues, and circulation
 - Contains carotenoids, terpenoids, choline, potassium (high) and other minerals, vitamins A, B, C, D.
- Jasmine
 - Contains jasmonate (anticancer compound)
 - May help decrease heart disease and stroke
 - Anti-bacterial and anti-viral properties
 - Reduces fat and cholesterol absorption
- Coriander
 - Digestive aid used to treat stomach disorders
 - Appetite stimulant
 - Antioxidant and anti-inflammatory compounds
 - Volatile oils: chief components D-(+)-linalool (coriandrol)
 - Fatty oils: chief fatty acids petroselinic acid, oleic acid, linolenic acid
- Milk thistle
 - Protects and regenerates liver tissue
 - Kidney and bladder cleanser
 - Silymarin is a flavonoid that enables milk thistle to protect the liver
- Tulsi
 - Adaptogenic properties help relieve stress and adapt more quickly to change in environment
 - Also a natural calmative



Brewing hints:

- Use 1 teaspoon of tea to 8-10 ounces of hot (*not boiling*) water. Increase or dilute to bird's preference.
- Let the tea cool completely before offering it to your birds.
- Remove the tea bag or steeper before serving.
- If your bird is suspicious, steep tea for a shorter period (make tea more dilute).
- Substitute tea for water when baking or cooking for your birds (e.g. bird bread/muffins, beans/rice/pasta blends, etc).
- Never replace drinking water with tea! You may also offer herbal teas dry or mixed with dry or fresh foods.

To order our TEAKS Tea Blends for your birds, please visit

www.facebook.com/Tea4Beaks

Orders ship as fresh blends become available!