

Caffeine has a greater effect on boys than girls, says study of teens

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MacPherson/Getty Boys crave caffeine more than girls, perhaps because they get more of a buzz from it, according to a new study of teenagers from 12-17 years old.

Boys get more of a buzz than girls from caffeine - and they'll go to greater lengths to get it, according to a new study [reported by Discovery News](#) that focuses on the

drug's health impact on teens.

The study, published in "Behavioral Pharmacology," examined how drinking caffeinated beverages affected 12 to 17 year olds. Researchers at the [University of Buffalo](#) found that boys were willing to work for a longer period of time than girls at a computer game to win a caffeinated soda.

Lead researcher and University of Buffalo neurobiologist [Jennifer R. Temple](#) told Discovery News that she expected caffeine-containing beverages to work the most strongly on those who drank the most caffeine. Surprisingly, the results pointed to a relationship between wanting caffeinated soda and gender.

"We aren't sure [why boys responded more], but we speculate that it could have to do with circulating hormones and their effect on the metabolism of caffeine," she said.

The physiological effects of caffeine were also greater for boys. "Basically, what we are finding is that girls seem less sensitive," Temple said.

More teens are drinking increasing amounts of caffeinated beverages, but

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caffeine's effect on growth is not very well known, according to Discovery News. Researchers have begun to study the drug's impact on teens' health. The study controlled for factors such as thirst, boredom and regular caffeine consumption.

Temple doesn't think caffeine is definitely dangerous for teens, but says guzzling a lot isn't healthy for either gender.

"Our research and the work of others suggest that moderate or occasional caffeine use in adolescents is unlikely to have major detrimental effects," Temple said. "But as a parent, I would be aware of how much caffeine my children are consuming and look for signs of excessive use, especially concerning sleep habits."

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