

Forum: Caffeine Allergy

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Abstract

Medical Veritas has published on pages 252–260 of Volume 1, Issue 2 a manuscript by Ruth Whalen entitled, *Ongoing caffeine anaphylaxis: a differential for mental illness* which presents an informative and complete summary of the action of caffeine in the body and some of the consequences. A. Hoffer, MD, PhD, FRCP(C) comments, “It supports my view which I have had for many years that too many are suffering from caffeine overdose. As a rule I advise all my patients to decrease their coffee to zero if they can, but never to have more than one or two cups daily. I recall one of my patients who drank forty (40) cups of coffee each day and suffered from severe chronic anxiety. Compounding the toxic effect was the sugar she added to each cup. Schizophrenics do drink too much and this is often encouraged by the hospital and the coffee machines in their lobbies. I know of one patient who consumed thirty (30) cups daily and needed 30 milligrams of haldol merely to overcome the effect of the caffeine. When the coffee was stopped the dose of medication was decreased sharply. The family estimated it cost them US \$2000 each year to pay for the coffee and the drug needed to counteract the effect of the coffee.”

We now present four experiences of individuals as they each recall how their lives were personally affected by caffeine allergy; how the drugs used to treat mental illness were ineffective, and the change that occurred after finally discovering they were sensitive to caffeine.

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