

What can I say - its not the best for you but it's difficult for just about any dancer to go without it...me included. These days I make my coffee at home - french press with half n half (yum) and coconut sugar or regular sugar if I run out of the coconut sugar. I love the taste of coffee. I have been literally drinking it since I've been an infant - my mother used to have me drink café con leche from a baby bottle. Coffee helps me to focus and actually has a calming affect because I am ADHD. It also helped me to curb my appetite in between dance classes or rehearsals back I my dancin days.

I know there is "the good" and "the bad" when it comes to coffee. I must have quit several times only to realize that if don't go ballistic by drinking several cups a day that it wouldn't be detrimental to my health. Jeez...coffee is such a staple all around the world I think that if a study came out tomorrow that coffee causes cancer, not many would take it seriously (I'd probably cross check the data to see where all the information was coming from...it's just what I do).

These days my only worry with coffee that I have are the creamers that are used. For example, Dunkin Doughnuts uses a pump dispenser with a creamer + sweetener mix to dole out the cream - which is OK if I only knew what was inside the dispenser. Don't get me wrong, DD was my go to when it came to getting a coffee and breakfast sandwich. For the cash strapped dancer DD did the trick. I'd get a large coffee extra, extra and a bacon egg and cheese sandwich (and sometimes a glazed doughnut). Because I was dancing all day, the calories that this very affordable meal packed me with was burned off in a matter of hours...no big deal.

Based on the DD website, a large cup of black coffee is 5 calories. If you add one tablespoon of DD Extra Extra creamer, it adds 40 calories. When I used to go to DD and ask for a large coffee extra extra, the person would pump on the creamer dispenser 8X. I don't know how many tablespoons are in one pump but lets assume that each pump equals to one tablespoon, then, if my math is right,  $8 \times 40 = 320$  calories.

Not bad...let me see the ingredients that are in DD Extra, Extra creamer.

*"Milk, Sugar, Cream, Contains 2% or less of Natural Flavors, **Dipotassium Phosphate**, Potassium Citrate, Carrageenan. Contains milk. Produced in a facility that also processes tree nuts and soy."*

Does anyone go to the store to get a bag of Dipotassium Phosphate to snack on...yikes!

*As a food additive, dipotassium phosphate is used in imitation dairy creamers, dry powder beverages, mineral supplements, and starter cultures.* [\[2\]](#)

Lets check out just cream or in most cases, half n half.

Half n half contains 19 calories per tablespoon.  $8 \times 19 = 152$ .

One teaspoon of sugar is 16 calories.  $8 \times 16 = 128$

$128 + 152 = 280$  calories

Much better. On the other hand, 8 teaspoons of sugar is just crazy. I generally put 3. So to revise... $3 \times 16 = 48$ , with a grand total of  $152 + 48 = 173$ .

Anyways, the moral of this story is that if you are going to grab yourself a cup of Joe before class, make sure that you know what's going into it and that the ingredients are actually food and not some chemical in place of real food. On the other hand, if you are in a bind and can't afford a five dollar cup of coffee from Starbucks, Dunkin isn't the best but at least its not going to kill you.

Do what you need to do always with your body in mind.

Dance On

Dani