

Patient Information - The Decaff Project

De-caffeinated Drinks Trial

Patient information leaflet

Falls Team

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Information accurate at time of going to print.

What is involved?

Caffeinated tea and coffees are currently served as standard within the trust, with decaffeinated drinks as optional. From November 2024, for a period of three months, we will be serving de-caffeinated drinks as standard.

Why are we conducting this trial?

Caffeine, found in certain drinks like tea and coffee, is a stimulant that can irritate the bladder. If you have an overactive bladder, you may experience urgency, increase need to urinate, and waking during the night to pass urine. Which, in turn may increase your risk of falling, which can often happen when rushing to reach the toilet in time.

Falls associated with toileting made up an average of 36% of all falls per month between September and November 2023, here at Darent Valley Hospital.

A fall can have a large impact on the individual it happens to, as well as on the healthcare system. Around 1 in 3 adults over 65 & half of people over 80 will have at least one fall a year.

Cutting out caffeine and switching to decaffeinated tea and coffee may improve your bladder health and reduce these urinary symptoms. This may in turn reduce your risk of falling.

In 2021, University hospital of Leicester NHS Trust conducted a similar trial, which resulted in a 30% reduction in falls related to toileting.

Other benefits to switching to decaffeinated drinks:

Other benefits of switching to decaffeinated tea/ coffee include:

- Improved sleep
- Reduce noticeable/ irregular heartbeats (palpitations)
- Helps prevent dehydration and headaches
- Reduces indigestion

Are there any side effects to reducing caffeine intake?

If you drink caffeinated tea and coffee on a daily basis, you may experience caffeine withdrawal, and experience headaches and lethargy. These symptoms may develop between 12-24 hours after cessation and may last for a couple of days. To reduce the risk of this occurring you can gradually reduce the amount of caffeinated drinks that you consume. If these symptoms do occur, ensure you drink plenty to maintain hydration. Aim for 6-8 glasses of fluid per day, unless advised differently by your clinician. This can include water, squash, milk etc. This may increase urinary symptoms in this period as total fluid intake has increased. Try to avoid drinks high in acidity as these may also irritate the bladder.

Caffeinated drinks will remain available in the hospital, however on request only.

Sustaining the change!

Upon leaving hospital, if you wish to continue with decaffeinated hot drinks then please buy decaffeinated alternative on your return home. However, if you wish to return to drinking caffeinated hot drinks, we firstly would like you to reflect on the potential benefits you have gained by cutting out caffeine. If you still wish to return to drinking caffeinated drinks, we urge you to return to drinking these drinks gradually, to reduce the impact it may have on urgency when needing to go to the toilet.

To further maintain your safety at home, please also consider the following:

- Rugs and loose carpets (ensure they are appropriately secured to the floor)
- Having walking aids to hand
- Well-fitting non-slip footwear
- Ensuring grab handles (if required), are appropriately placed and fixed securely.

This leaflet has been developed in partnership with the Patient Information Group and our DGT Patient Partners

Patient Information

Further patient leaflets are available from the Dartford and Gravesham NHS Trust website: <https://www.dgt.nhs.uk/patients-and-visitors/patient-information-leaflets> Please ask a member of staff if you require information in another language or format.

Complaints, Comments, Concerns and Compliments

Please speak to the staff in the ward or department caring for you if you have any concerns or questions relating to your care or that of a loved one.

Compliments can be shared by visiting: <https://www.dgt.nhs.uk/contact-us/compliments>

Alternatively, please contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on 01322 428382 Email: dgn-tr.PALS@nhs.net

Patient Property

Please do not bring large sums of money or valuable items into the hospital. Dartford and Gravesham NHS Trust accepts no responsibility for the loss or damage to personal property unless it is handed into Trust staff for safe-keeping.

Dartford and Gravesham NHS Trust operate smoke-free hospitals. This means that smoking is not permitted anywhere on hospital grounds. For help to quit smoking please visit www.kentcht.nhs.uk/service/one-you-smokefree/

Use of alcohol or illicit drugs is not permitted anywhere on the hospital site. For drug and alcohol support please speak to your nurse or doctor or

Visit: www.changegrowlive.org/westkent/help

Call: 0330 128 1113

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