Exposure to lead from intake of coffee

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Food and beverages is one of the primary sources of intake of and exposure to lead, with beverages accounting for almost 50%. Previous studies from Denmark have estimated that the intake of lead from coffee is very high and may contribute to up to 20% of the total lead intake from food and beverages. This estimate is, however, based on older, non-published data. In the current project extensive chemical analyses of coffee beans, drinking water and ready-to-drink coffee have been performed. The results hereof have been compared to calculations of the total intake of lead from food and beverages.

The results show that the intake of lead from coffee is considerably lower than previously estimated and account for 4.2% and 3.3% of the total lead intake from food and beverages for Danish men and women, respectively. It can generally be concluded that the intake of lead from coffee is low in comparison with other types of food, and that it does not constitute a substantial part of the total intake of lead with food and beverages.

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