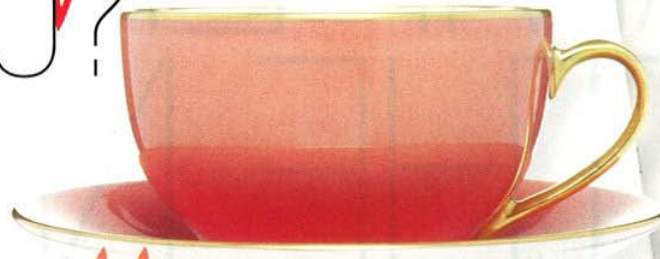




Got a burning question for our nutritionist Kristen? Email cleoinsight@acpmagazines.com.au

WHAT'S YOUR *cup* TELLING YOU?



CLEO's resident nutritionist, Kristen Beck (beckhealth.com.au), rates your two favourite fixes.

coffee

tea

CELEB ALTER EGO	The ultimate in trailer-park cool, Mary-Kate Olsen's (right) devotion to caffeine is rock solid, as long as it comes in "all shades of black".			From Save The Whales protests to dates with mates at Studio City in LA, Hayden Panettiere (left) downs vanilla no-fat chai teas whenever her schedule permits.
STREET CRED	The caffeine fiend is determined, dependent and style-conscious, and embraces coffee for its ability to conceal the most over-percolated minds.			Creatures of habit, these healthy-living enthusiasts love the adrenalin found in good deeds and sign up for whatever petition will have them.
MENTAL BENEFITS	"Caffeine is a stimulant, which can improve alertness and help you focus – as long as you don't have too much."			"While the stimulant effect isn't quite as strong as coffee, some studies suggest tea can improve mental focus," Beck says.
PHYSICAL PROS	"Research shows that coffee may protect against type-2 diabetes, gallstones and possibly Parkinson's disease," Beck says.			"Tea contains anti-oxidants, which may help reduce the risk of certain cancers (gastric, oesophageal, ovarian). They can also prevent blood clotting and lower cholesterol levels. If you're after the health benefits, green tea is best."
MENTAL CONS	"Drinking too much coffee can increase stress levels and blood pressure. Caffeine acts as a diuretic, therefore leaving you more susceptible to dehydration, which can also impair your mental performance."			"It's the same with tea. So, like coffee, drinking too much of it can actually drain your body of fluid and impair your mental performance."
PHYSICAL NEGATIVES	"For most people, one or two cups of coffee a day seems to be a safe level of intake," says Beck. "Drinking too much (more than four cups) can raise blood pressure and increase the risk of heart disease and stroke."			"If you consume too much tea (without milk), the tannins in it can reduce the digestion and absorption of nutrients from your food."
SLEEPING PATTERNS	"Those sensitive to caffeine should try to avoid it in the late afternoon and evening, as the stimulant action of coffee can keep you wide awake," advises Beck.			"As tea contains less caffeine than coffee, it's less likely to affect your sleep. However, if you're having trouble hitting the pillow, a milk-based drink is best."
EFFECTS ON SKIN	"As coffee is dehydrating, it can make your skin appear dull (which accentuates your wrinkles). Try to drink at least one to two glasses of water for each cup."			"The anti-oxidants in tea should be good for your skin, however, like coffee, if you consume too much, you will become dehydrated," says Beck.