It’s Tea Time!

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Happy and Healthful 2013! New Year’s resolutions abound and many may focus on food/beverage and nutrition topics. So, January’s focus is on Tea, an increasingly popular beverage throughout the United States because of taste and health connections.

Tea Leaves 101
- Black, Green, Oolong & White teas come from the *Camellia sinensis* plant.
- Black & Oolong teas are oxidized resulting in their taste & color distinguishing characteristics.
- Green & white teas are not oxidized, therefore resembling the fresh tea leaf.
- Oolong tea is considered midway between Black and Green teas in strength and color.
- In 2010, Americans drank 80% Black tea, 19.5% Green tea & 0.5% Oolong/White tea.

Source—Tea Association of the USA

Tea and Health: A Few Possible Connections
- Tea contains flavonoids, believed to have anti-oxidant properties that work to neutralize free radicals contributing to many chronic diseases.
- Tea may reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease by decreasing lipid oxidation and positively benefit blood vessel function.
- Preliminary research suggests tea flavonoids may inhibit uncontrolled cell growth and boost the immune system.
- Theanine, amino acid present virtually only in tea, may help prevent memory declines of the aging process.

Source—Tea Association of the USA

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