



## CAFFEINE RANT

By Kenneth Lundgren

Just last week at the Nyack café post-ride, some new guy I coach got coffee, and then Gavi (my friend) said, “Don’t let Kenny see you drinking that.” And then the guy asked me why coffee was so bad...

And so I started in, went off on the top of my head, then came home and immediately wrote down what I had told him... It went something like this! (hope you ain’t no avid coffee drinker, no offense!)

Not a huge fan of caffeine. I only drink it on the mornings of hard, short time trials or races under 75 minutes long. If you only take coffee a few times during the year, then you can really feel the jolt from the caffeine. However, if you drink coffee regularly, you need to drink more water because caffeine is a diuretic.

I also don't like caffeine because it acts almost like a drug. If you fail to drink your daily doses, you can end up with headaches, excessive sleepiness, a feeling like you can't function. Withdrawal from caffeine can take anywhere from a few days to a few weeks depending upon how much caffeine you customarily consume.

Coffee is dead calories, just wasted. So if you cut out drinking it, you're looking at 300-400 less calories per week – that can easily add up to 1 pound of weight loss in the beginning...

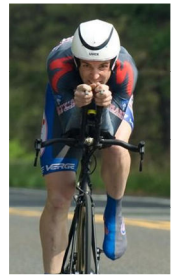
I've also read that caffeine does reduce dopamine, a chemical produced by the brain that affects the brain's pleasure centers. This can create more depression and anxiety and won't allow you to enjoy the bike as much (like, remember how you feel after super rides? Caffeine can depress this...).

For people with high blood pressure or high blood sugar levels (diabetes), caffeine can raise both these levels. I should also note, perhaps because of the body's inability to retain water, you're more prone to headaches and irritability, not to mention it can be harder to sleep with all that caffeine in your blood. It can also be hard on the stomach...

Bottom line is caffeine unnaturally elevates your HR, and your body becomes used to this... Just NOT a coffee fan. Drink tea. Or WATER! =)

That's my rant.

Kenneth Lundgren



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*Ken also races for the Northeastern Hardware Cycling Team and is one of the area's top time trialists, finishing 2<sup>nd</sup> for consecutive years in the New Jersey Time Trial Cup. Northeastern Hardware is one of New England's strongest elite squads, competing in many of the area's Pro/1/2 events. The team has won the Garden State Cup for six consecutive years and looks to make it seven straight in 2009.*

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