



The Physiological Response to *1,3,7-trimethyl-1H-purine-2,6(3H,7H)-dione*

By Dan Dennhardt, Phi Kappa Psi

You've all seen him show up in your classes... wild hair, bloodshot eyes, a five o'clock shadow at 11:00am. Some might call him a drug addict, and in fact that may not be so far off. The telltale sign of this special breed of CWRU student is the 10% recycled paper Starbucks cup which he's nursing like a child. I am that guy. I am a coffee addict.

No matter the time of day, the place, or the occasion I will show up with a cup of joe in hand. Never mind that it makes my hands tremble and stains my teeth; that need to constantly sip a cup of coffee is both a pleasure and a curse. In the past four years at Case I've come to embrace coffee as a necessary part of life, as have countless students, faculty, business professionals, truck drivers, police officers, and other Americans from all walks of life. I therefore feel compelled to educate you, my peers, about the merits and dangers of this addictive and bitter liquid.

As you read further, bear in mind that the majority of this article is taken directly from anecdotal experience, Google searches, and Wikipedia and that no statements I make have been evaluated by the FDA. Should you attempt to cite any information presented in this article in a paper or publication of your own, may the Gods have mercy on you. Let's start with a brief history of Coffee.

Coffee is a stimulant beverage brewed from roasted coffee beans, a product of the coffee plant. Discovered in Ethiopia in the 9th century, coffee now one of the most prolific beverages in the world. It is widely brewed in homes, restaurants, and coffee shops, the most notable of which is Starbucks, a retail giant which operates over 15,000 stores in 44 countries. As a side note, Starbucks operates 5 locations within two miles of the CWRU Campus.

To many, the most important aspect of coffee is the caffeine which it contains. Caffeine is psychoactive stimulant which helps to ward off drowsiness, which may explain why so many people start their day with a tall steaming cup of coffee. The physiological effects of caffeine and coffee consumption are a hot subject of research, though studies show a wide variety of findings. We'll begin with the pros of drinking coffee.

Pros:

- A study has shown that simply inhaling the aroma of coffee may reduce the damage to nerve cells associated with stress caused by sleep deprivation.
 - Regular drinkers of coffee exhibit a slightly lower rate of death from heart disease than do non coffee drinkers.
 - Women who drink coffee in moderate amounts show improved memory function after age 65
 - Studies have found that drinking moderate amounts of coffee (three to five 5 oz. cups per day) may reduce the risk of Alzheimer's disease, kidney stones, gallstones, depression and even suicide.
- A 2005 study indicated that drinking coffee improves short term (working) memory

Cons:

- Drinking Coffee to stay alert may mask serious sleep problems, such as sleep apnea
- High levels of caffeine may lead to jitteriness, anxiety, increased heart rate, high blood pressure, hyperthermia, and stroke

Consuming caffeine (especially through coffee) may give you a short term boost of energy, but it will almost certainly have an adverse impact on your sleep. If you really are addicted to coffee, consider drinking decaf, but keep in mind that decaffeinated coffee is not entirely free of caffeine. On average, a Venti drip coffee at Starbucks will pump about 450mg of caffeine into your system, while the same size decaf has about 15mg.

Lastly, let me leave you with a final thought to contemplate. It's been shown that in young people (ages 20-25), napping is a more effective way to counter sleepiness than is caffeine. So the next time you're staying up late to write that SAGES paper or to crank out a few hundred lines of code because you just really want to work ahead... or because you've put it off until the night before it's due, consider finding a comfy couch and counting sheep instead of fueling up on Colombia's best.

Faculty Forum Reflection

By Laura Ansley, Sigma Psi

The Faculty Forum, cosponsored by Greek Life and UCITE, occurred on November 14th as a part of Battle of the Sides. Over 100 students, both Greek and non-Greek, became involved in the discussion of “Is Four Years and One Major Enough?” and gave great feedback as to why students feel obligated to overload their schedules with too many credit hours and too many majors and minors. The panel was moderated by Provost William “Bud” Baeslack III and included James McGuffin-Cawley of Materials Science and Engineering, Renee Sentilles of the History Department, Dean Lynmarie Hamel of Undergraduate Studies, and students Kelli Herrick and Brad Farley.

Students became most involved in the discussion about completing double majors and dual degrees. Many students present were working on more than just one major, whether completing two separate degrees, like one student in Chemical Engineering and Music, or even students who were working on minors as well. Both professors on the panel and in the audience explained their view that students do not have to move on after finishing the basic requirements of a major. It is a question of whether students want to have a breadth of learning or a depth. Deeper study in a primary major may foster creativity and passion in research in one field, but receiving a broad liberal arts education by majoring in multiple areas may give a student a range of fields to choose from. Most of all, according to some panelists, students should not feel pressured to double major just because they have extra credit hours to fill up.

From the students’ perspective, many stated that they had varied interests that they wanted the opportunity to explore. For others, including panelist Kelli Herrick, one major is geared towards a career and another towards enjoying. However, many in the room felt that with the pressures of so many course requirements, opportunities like study abroad or internships are not always feasible. Some students also feel that even when they choose to take the average load of five courses and fifteen credit hours, they still do not have enough time to finish all their schoolwork, and in order to graduate in four years many students take six or even seven courses a semester. With university guidelines allowing students to take up to 19 credit hours without approval, students do not have to get an “overload” to take more credits than one can handle. Others feel that six classes are a breeze and would like to more easily be able to take more. As always, opinions varied by personal experience and course of study.

Battling Senioritis

By Chris Coy, Beta Theta Pi

Senioritis - noun. A crippling disease that strikes high school and college seniors. Symptoms include: laziness, an over-excessive wearing of track pants, old athletic shirts, sweatpants, and sweatshirts. Also features a lack of studying, repeated absences, and a generally dismissive attitude. The only known cure is a phenomenon known as [Graduation](#). (UrbanDictionary.com)

If you see yourself increasingly detached from your school work and activities, saying things like “I’ve put in my time” and “It doesn’t matter, I’m already hired/admitted to XYZ”, or becoming increasingly annoyed with just about anything, you’ve probably got yourself a case of senioritis. Here are some hints to stay on track:

- Let people know you have changing priorities, and that attending an IM volleyball game the day before five graduate school applications are due might not be your most important activity. At the same time, there is no excuse for not managing your time well.
- If you’re tired of your classes, use an open course slot to take a class outside of your major, or use that time to focus on other activities such as a part-time job, a hobby you’ve ignored for the last couple years, or a new campus group. At the same time, you always need to do well in
- If you find yourself without desire to be active in your Greek chapters or campus groups, put yourself into a different role than you are currently in. Move out of the officer position you’ve held for two years if you’re not motivated by it anymore, or try to become a closer friend or mentor to younger chapter members, instead of the grumpy, often-absent seniors you may have seen when you were a new member.

In general, try to mix up your activities and responsibilities if you find them becoming stale and uninteresting.

