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**PACKING A BEACH BAG?
DON'T FORGET THE ICED TEA**

Iced Tea: The Perfect Pick-me-Up for Health, Hydration and Hot Summers

NEW YORK, NY, June 6, 2007 – As you head off to the beach this summer, don't forget to pack the summer essentials – towel, a good book, sunscreen and iced tea. Yes, iced tea. Because it's great-tasting and calorie-free, iced tea is a smart beverage choice to help keep our bodies hydrated during the hot summer months. What's more, research suggests that tea may play an important role in helping to maintain a healthy weight and support the body's ability to fight two of the most common forms of skin cancer. This summer, choose your beverage wisely by choosing tea.

"June's National Iced Tea Month and the start of the summer season is a great time to think about all that tea has to offer," says Joe Simrany, president of the Tea Council of the U.S.A. "Iced tea – green, black, white or oolong – is a tasty, refreshing and healthy way to keep cool and hydrated during the summer months. With a multitude of research suggesting that the substances in tea help the body maintain healthy cells and tissues, contribute to heart health and keep your weight down, why would anyone choose to drink anything else?"

Tea Drinkers and Reduced Risk of Skin Cancer

In addition to using sun block, studies suggest that tea may also help your body fight skin cancer. According to a University of Arizona study, participants who drank iced black tea and citrus peel had a 42 percent reduced risk of skin cancer and hot black tea consumption was associated with a significantly lower risk of squamous cell carcinoma. A recent study, published in the May 2007 *Journal of the American Academy of*

Dermatology, found that tea drinkers had a decreased risk of developing squamous cell or basal cell carcinoma, the two most common types of skin cancer. The study showed positive results among those who drank two cups of tea per day and the effect was even more pronounced among those who had been long-term tea drinkers.

Tea Boosts Metabolism, May Aid in Weight Maintenance

Most of us work hard to get in shape before the summer bathing suit season. A number of studies suggest that tea, particularly green tea, may help keep those pounds off all summer long. Specifically, research suggests that the combination of tea catechins and caffeine provided from three to four cups of tea daily can help boost metabolism, maintain insulin sensitivity, and reduce body fat by boosting fat oxidation. These findings suggest that drinking tea could have a role in helping to maintain an overall healthy weight.

You Are What You Drink

In 2006, a team of nutrition experts created Healthy Beverage Guidelines to advise Americans on how to make wiser beverage choices. Published in the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*, the Guidelines group beverages into six categories along with recommendations as to the range of how much people should drink each day from each of the three categories. After water, the Guidelines recommend tea as the next most consumed beverage. In fact, the Beverage Panel suggests that people drink up to eight servings of iced or hot unsweetened tea per day. The Guidelines specify that in order to combat obesity, Americans must take the majority of their daily fluids in the form of water and non-caloric tea or coffee, with fewer beverage servings coming from non-fat or low-fat dairy drinks and 100 percent fruit juices. The Guidelines further advise that soda and other beverages that do not contribute nutritional value to the diet should be limited to no more than one serving per day. These recommendations are in keeping with research conducted by scientists at the Jean Mayer USDA Human Nutrition Research Center on Aging (HNRCA) at Tufts University, which found that the leading source of calories in the average American diet may be soda and sweet drinks.

In Summer's Heat, Hydrate the Healthy Way

Tea is the most widely consumed beverage in the world next to water and can be found in almost 80 percent of all U.S. households. On any given day, over 127 million Americans are drinking tea – mostly over ice. Given its great taste and host of health benefits, it's no wonder why. This summer as you think of ways to beat the heat, drink to your health with an icy, cold glass of iced tea! For more information about the role of tea in a healthy diet, visit www.teausa.org

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