



Yes You Can Get Healthy, Lose Weight for Life and Beat Disease with one of the world's most Coveted Delicacies.

Chocolate lovers, there could be some good news in the air.

Naturally, any chocolate lover doesn't really have to be told that. No matter what, we want to believe that it simply has to be good for us doesn't it? After all, if it tastes that good, makes us feel great after it – surely there's health benefits! Well, with the emerging medical evidence, it's looking better and better all the time.

Benefits for Cardiovascular and Blood Pressure

The evidence is out there that eating foods that are flavanoid rich, correlates with a reduced risk of cardiovascular disease (AAAS recent study). One of the main contributors to heart disease are the fatty deposits in arteries that oxidize, and in turn create inflammation that leads to disease and eventually major surgery. What some of these studies have revealed are, that the flavonols in cocoa have been found to prevent these fatty like substances that float around in our bloodstream from oxidizing. This therefore prevents the clogging that we so desperately need to avoid.

Understanding Flavanoids and Flavanols – it's all good!

Flavanoids and flavanols are rich plant based compounds with antioxidant properties like green tea, grapeseed, cranberries, pomegranate etc. And, the great news is, the cocoa bean contains large quantities of these antioxidant rich flavanoids. But when they occur in chocolate, they're referred to as flavanols. Science has also revealed that dark chocolate – due to the higher content of cocoa – has a higher flavanoid content. Milk and white chocolate, and of course the candied chocolates have far lower flavanoid content. The extra additives dilute the effect and with the addition of sugars and preservatives, then

start to reduce the healthy component of the chocolate. With the manufacturing and chemical processing of syrups and artificial flavours into the common 'gift' chocolates you find much of the flavanoids are removed.

The higher sugar content in milk and white chocolate raises the GI level which in turn can affect insulin resistance and is not advisable for anyone suffering diabetes. The low GI level of darker chocolate with a cocoa content of 65% and higher is far safer. You'll find it's also easier to eat smaller amounts of quality dark chocolate, as the slightly more bitter taste and fatty consistency makes it far easier to stop at small quantities. Not to mention how popular it is now in dessert offerings at the finest cafes and restaurants. Many chocolatiers and specialist chocolate chefs are emerging with their own unique chocolate blends that specialize in hundreds of different presentations of dark chocolate, everything from dark chocolate mixed with fine merlots, spices, cinnamon, antioxidant rich berries and even chilli.



A pure dark chilli chocolate with a rich espresso is a fabulous after dinner experience.

The addiction factor of the sweeter milk chocolates that are full of all the wrong ingredients are quite real. I remember stories from many of my chocoholic friends who've said they can't stop with one bite! Before long an entire family block of milk chocolate is devoured in one sitting. Or the famous Australian Chocolate Tim Tam biscuits have many an addictive fan who could polish off a packet in front of a favourite movie, no problem at all. Hence their fame, and being known as a true 'Aussie icon'.

The endorphin affect after eating chocolate is very soothing and so it's no wonder it's the food of choice after an emotional upheaval or a stressfilled day. Heck, any reason at all can call for chocolate. However it also goes without saying that overconsumption of any kind of chocolate is going to play havoc with your waistline. It's still a food high in calories. However, you'll find that the fat levels in dark chocolate promote that sense of fullness sooner, so it actually is easier to eat smaller amounts.

Good and Bad Fats

Don't be afraid of eating the right fats. In fact the good fats, that are your omega 3 fats, are essential for health and have been proven to promote weight loss. The body requires good fat to operate and has no natural way to produce omega 3 fats itself. Trans fats (the bad ones) are fats like deep fry oils, the fats in takeaway foods, junk foods, cakes, pastries. They're the kinds of fats that will oxidize our blood platelets causing oxidized cholesterol and promote cardiac attacks, weight gain and contribute toward other diseases.

Examples of good fats are your fish oils, coconut oil, olive, duck, goose fats etc rich in omega 3's. The fats in dark chocolate are the good fats.

Dr Ross Walker says **'the antioxidants found in the cacao bean are the richest known to man'**, but when chocolate manufacturers get a hold of it and throw in all the additives and sugars they convert it to food that's the most dangerous for our health. Obesity is a serious worldwide problem and standard sugary milk chocolate is often the culprit with the bulk of the population. It's calorie levels are very high and many people overconsume on top of their normal diet thereby blowing out their daily calorie intake.

High Blood Pressure? Try some Dark Chocolate

Medical studies have proven that Nitric Oxide plays an important part in healthy blood pressure levels and cardio health. Healthy rates of nitric oxide activity have been measured after consumption of flavanoid rich cocoa. A study was done with residents of an island in Panama. These indigenous people drank about 5 cups of cocoa each day and use it a lot in their food preparation. Remember – they'd be consuming it sugar free. So the taste is far different to the way we commonly know it. However it was still found that there was an indisputable link between the nitric oxide activity measured in the healthy blood pressure levels after the cocoa consumption.

Reduce the Chance of Stroke and Heart Attack.

Take dark choccy when travelling!

Reducing the bloods ability to clot, reduces the risk of heart attack and stroke, and also deep vein thrombosis that all frequent travelers are warned about. Flavanol-rich cocoa and chocolate have been shown to act somewhat similarly to aspirin in order to promote healthy blood flow. Keep the blood flow healthy, and the chance of clotting is obviously reduced. We often take an aspirin for headache and blood thinning purposes.

Could this mean that a bite of dark chocolate could help? And also, is there a reason a hot chocolate drink is offered on many airlines now during long flights for anything other than sheer enjoyment?

Obviously for patients who are medically advised to be taking a daily dose of aspirin, we're not advocating you stop that and move to chocolate. But then again, there are plenty of people who can't take aspirin and also prefer to take a more natural rather than a medication approach to good health. Then surely, aiming for a flavanol rich food could be a good move. Mind you, the endorphin charged chocolate high is only temporary. If your doctor has advised you to take a daily dose of aspirin, it's because it has a longer lasting effect and you need to be diligent and make sensible choices.



An enhanced sense of wellbeing

Speak to any chocolate devotee and they'll positively argue the fact that there are several bioactive compounds in chocolate that promote a sense of wellbeing, a heightened sense of awareness, general alertness and generally feel great after a few bites. It's a similar feeling after vigorous exercise. Naturally you don't want to substitute chocolate for exercise, although I know a lot of us would love that idea. Chocolate is rich in many stimulants one of which being tryptophan, an important amino acid. It acts like a natural desensitizer to pain and anxiety, hence the feel good affect. No wonder many a sad breakup story is told over a box of chocolates or gifts of chocolates often given as a peace offering.

Why we need more Antioxidants

Antioxidants are vital for health. It's a substance that inhibits free radical activity. Free radicals are responsible for oxidization created naturally by oxygen and other toxins. We all have a natural source of antioxidants in our system and we also produce free radicals. However an extra dose of free radicals can come from air, toxins, pollution,



stress, poor diet, junk food etc. It's when our antioxidant supply is too low to deal with the free radical attack, or when the free radical attack becomes intense, that inflammation can happen that eventually leads to disease.

Look at the simple example of a slice of apple left out in the air – it turns brown. It's been proven that antioxidants such as Vitamin C, D, E, beta-carotene etc are vital for the health of the human body.

And more importantly, it's been proven that dark chocolate and cocoa have one of the highest antioxidant content i.e. free radical absorption rate similar to many of the known antioxidant rich natural foods. Milk chocolate has far less a capacity. If you prefer milk chocolate it certainly doesn't mean that if you ate more of it, you'd eventually achieve the same level of antioxidant protection. In fact quite the contrary, due to the fact that you'd be consuming higher sugar and chemical content you'd be naturally consuming more free radicals. Not the affect we want, although I understand the thinking.

I recall standing in a queue in a café not so long ago, and there were a couple of guest chocolatiers in the store handing out free tastes of a beautiful new brand of pure dark chocolate. I had about 3 very small bites and immediately felt great with no temptation for more.

Pure, unsweetened cocoa powder is quite bitter to taste, but it starts out with twice the antioxidant content as dark chocolate. The more it's diluted down with milk, sugar and other flavouring processes to create the final product, the protective content reduces.

Here's something that you could argue with your doctor or nutritionist.

Researchers from the Harvard School of Public Health have found that those who eat chocolate up to 3 times a month, live almost a year longer than those who overconsume or those who avoid junk food and sweets altogether. Not much help however to a chocoholic! Who wants to reduce consumption of our favourite treat to only 3 times a month!!!

There are more companies starting to explore the power of antioxidant rich foods and no matter what you argue, you cannot deny that there's something powerful and healing about chocolate. In fact the cocoa bean will soon be listed among the known antioxidant rich foods right alongside green tea, grapeseed, rich dark berries and olives.

Don't laugh

Mars Incorporated are currently working with several pharmaceutical companies to develop a drug with isolated cocoa components based on chocolates' cardiovascular health benefits, to help patients with cardiovascular issues. According to doctors and researchers at the AAAS (American Assoc for the Advancement of Science) it's happening.

So in summary we've learned that there some undeniable chocolate health benefits:

- Blood pressure improvement
- Increased alertness
- Cardiovascular benefits
- Antioxidant Protection
- Wellness and sense of happiness.

So, here's a thought.

**If we combined the benefits of chocolate with the right mix of protein, carbohydrate and fibre, along with right GI and caloric level – what would we have?
A possible Super Food all for the price of a coffee and a muffin per serve.**

Let's be real. It's not the quick fix or the easy answer to the perfect body and super health. It all takes work and emotional commitment. But it sure is a fabulous first step.

For more detailed information about our Health Charged, Chocolate Meal Replacement go to <http://www.ResetReshapeRestyle.com/chocolate.html> then email me direct or call. That way I can send you pricing and answer queries.

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