

... FOR THE HEALTH AND WELL-BEING OF YOU AND YOUR FAMILY

THE REAL STORY BEHIND DARK CHOCOLATE

## CHOCOLATE 101



### HISTORY

As early as 200 B.C., Mayan tribes of Central and South America grinded a seed from a cacao (or cocoa) plant to a powder, then mixed it with various spices and water to make a spicy beverage. By the 1400s, the Aztec and Mayan tribes were using the cocoa seeds in various ways such as bartering and religious ceremonies. The Aztec and even the tribes they conquered used the seeds as money. Priests even used seeds to pay homage to the Gods.

### CHOCOLATE IN EUROPE

It took many centuries for chocolate to evolve as we know it. The cocoa bean was expensive to ship to Europe, so for several centuries it was only used by royalty and the upper class. Not until Europeans experimented with chocolate by adding sugar did chocolate's popularity increase. By the late 1700s machines designed to process beans made mass distribution of chocolate much easier. It wasn't until the mid 1800s chocolate was found in bar form.

### FUTURE OF CHOCOLATE

Recently, cocoa plants were recognized for holding antioxidants called flavanols. Research shows that the high concentration of this antioxidant is very beneficial and that consumption of dark chocolate can provide many healthy benefits.

## WHAT IS DARK CHOCOLATE?

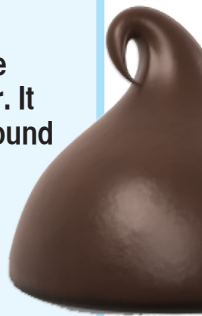
Dark chocolate is made from a higher percentage of the cocoa bean and contains little or no milk product. Consuming dark chocolate with higher concentrations of cocoa gives your body more healthy antioxidants. According to the USDA, the antioxidant capacity of 1 serving of Hershey's Extra Dark, dark chocolate (37g or 1.3 ounces) is equal to 3 cups of tea, 2 glasses of red wine or 1/3 cups of blueberries.

## BENEFITS OF DARK CHOCOLATE

A report released by the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition, states that "consuming 2.6 ounces of Hershey's Extra Dark Chocolate as well as 0.77 ounces of Hershey's Natural Cocoa positively impacted 45 study participants two hours after consumption." The study shows the participant's blood pressure was lowered and improvement was noted in their circulation.

## ALL IN MODERATION

Although there are great benefits associated with chocolate consumption, the cocoa bean is naturally packed with fat and calories. Enjoy chocolate in moderation and be sure to eat plenty of antioxidant-rich foods such as vegetables, fruits, and whole grains.



### THE PROOF IS IN THE CHOCOLATE PUDDING?

According to studies sponsored by the Hershey Center for Health and Nutrition, the benefits of cocoa and chocolate may impact the cardiovascular system, kidney function, brain health, immune system, diabetes and blood pressure. Research shows that cocoa and chocolate benefit vascular health in the following ways:

- Helps limit buildup of plaque in arteries by lowering LDL (bad) cholesterol
- Helps raise HDL (good) cholesterol
- Helps reduce platelet stickiness, which promotes healthy blood flow
- Reduces blood pressure
- May also have beneficial effects on maintaining healthy blood sugar levels, increasing blood flow in the brain, and keeping skin healthy



### KNOW THY CHOCOLATE

According to the American Dietetic Association when looking for products rich in flavanols, "look for non-alkalized or lightly alkalinized cocoas (also called "dutch" cocoa). Natural cocoa is not alkalinized. Also, look for darker chocolates made with at least 40% cocoa bean content or "Cocoa". Some examples include:

- Hershey's Extra Dark Squares (60% Cocoa)
- Ghirardelli's Intense Dark Midnight Reverie (86% Cocoa)
- Ghirardelli's Intense Dark Twilight Delight (72% Cocoa)
- Ghirardelli's Intense Dark Evening Dream (60% Cocoa)



### RESOURCES

[www.eatright.org](http://www.eatright.org)

[www.fieldmuseum.org](http://www.fieldmuseum.org)

[www.preparedfoods.com](http://www.preparedfoods.com)

[www.allchocolate.com](http://www.allchocolate.com)

[www.hersheys.com](http://www.hersheys.com)

[www.usda.org](http://www.usda.org)

[www.ghirardelli.com](http://www.ghirardelli.com)

For more information:  
[www.WellnessCoachesUSA.com](http://www.WellnessCoachesUSA.com)

