

New Report Reveals Extent of Chocolate's Health and Wellbeing Benefits

Chocolate has been much loved for many years - but now a new report reveals the health and wellbeing benefits people can gain from their consumption of this favourite treat.

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An ever-growing wealth of scientific research reveals the health and wellbeing benefits offered through moderate consumption of *all* kinds of chocolate.

Paul Hebblethwaite, Professor of Chocology and Cadbury Schweppes Global Science Director comments:

'We've all grown up enjoying chocolate as a favourite treat, and generations have known that chocolate makes you feel good, but there's a wealth of research that suggests that people can feel even better about enjoying it.'

Researchers are continually discovering ways in which chocolate can make us feel better - whether it be lifting your mood, or boosting antioxidant levels. Some of the most interesting findings from recent years include: Cocoa contains high levels of naturally occurring polyphenols that have **antioxidant properties** and work by fighting the free radicals, which attack cells causing disease and accelerated ageing. Dark chocolate contains especially **high levels of polyphenols** - great news for the hearts of those people who indulge in the taste of dark chocolate.[i]It's not just bars of chocolate that have these high levels of antioxidants - hot chocolate contains **higher concentrations of antioxidants than red wine or tea.**[ii]A recent study has suggested that eating chocolate may improve the way our brains work. The theobromine and phenylethylamine, as well as the caffeine in chocolate were shown to **increase alertness and mental performance.**[iii] Chocolate contains tryptophan, which is one of the building blocks that the body uses to make serotonin. Serotonin is a neurochemical that is associated in the brain with the **sensation of pleasure**. Experts have even pointed out that "chocolate is a blend of flavours and aromas so complex that food chemists have never been able to duplicate it in the lab."[iv] We may never understand why chocolate makes us feel good, but it's clear that there's a lot to it beyond fabulous taste.

[i] Source: ACNielsen Scantrack

[ii] Journal of Agricultural and Food Chemistry, 2003

[iii] www.sciencedaily.com

[iv] Peter Jaret, 'Three Cheers for Chocolate'. Health For Life, 1998

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