

Effect of Cocoa on the Cardiovascular System

One of the concern about eating chocolate bars is that they typically contain considerable amount of sugar, fat, and calories. The potential health promoting compounds found in chocolate include a category known as flavanols and these compounds are abundant in many plants, including Cocoa beans, which are the seeds of the cocoa tree.

Diets high in flavanols have been linked to improved cardiovascular health. These compounds often helps to improve Cardiovascular health, apparently by increasing the nitric oxide production, which helps to relax the smooth muscles of the wall of the arteries and improved blood flow and also may slightly decrease the blood pressure.

Dark chocolate often considered to improve blood sugar control which may help to prevent diabetes.

Cocoa beans are fermented, dried, roasted and ground into powder, which may be used in some food and beverages. In theory, adding cocoa powder to your diet maybe a healthier way to consume flavanols than eating Chocolate bars.

However, the flavanol content of cocoa powder varies widely and depends on several factors, including the genetics of the particular Cocoa plant harvested and the make up of the soil in which the crop was grown. But the biggest effect is in the way how the beans are processed.

It has been known that Dutch processed Coco is treated with a substance that make it slightly less acidic, which removes some of the bitterness, but also some of the flavanols. Since flavanols are not listed on the nutrition facts panel of food packages, it is not possible to know how much different brands contain.

If you like the flavor of unsweetened cocoa powder in your coffee or other drinks, there is no reason not to add it. But you probably won't get very big dose of the flavors in just a teaspoon full of cocoa powder.

If you would like chocolate, having a couple of small squares of dark chocolate can be a good way to satisfy your sweet tooth and modestly boost your flavanol intake without adding excessive calories and fat . It is true that dark chocolates likely have more flavanols than milk chocolates but both chocolates still contain sugar and fat.

It's always better to limit your chocolate intake, including dark chocolate to reduce your fat and sugar content. As we know, in terms of health related benefits, the best option is to eat plenty of fruits and vegetables to get enough flavanols, as well as heart healthy nutrients like fiber, vitamins, and minerals. Good sources of flavanols include berries, grapes, and black or green tea.

I am not opposed to eating small amount of dark chocolate, but keep it in mind about the sugar and the fat contents in them. Next time you want to show your love towards your spouse, make sure you take non- Dutch dark chocolate and have her eat no more than a couple of small pieces daily

Here we go again. This guy tries to take away another thing from us. Right? No, the bottom line is MODERATION!!!

Keshava Aithal

Dr Keshava Aithal

ಊ 8 Double o