

Dark chocolate good for heart: Swiss study

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HIGN COCOA BUTTER CONTENT: Can help to prevent both the narrowing and hardening of the arteries



Just two ounces of good-quality chocolate with cocoa butter can help to prevent hardening of the arteries. - REUTERS

LONDON – A couple of squares of the dark chocolate every day could help stave off heart disease, say Swiss scientists.

Just two ounces of good –quality chocolate with a high cocoa butter content can help to prevent narrowing and hardening of the arteries.

A study was carried out on smokers – smoking is known to damage arterial function – but the effect of eating dark chocolate is believed to be true for non-smokers.

The subjects ate either two squares of the dark chocolate with 74 per cent cocoa solids or white chocolate.

Dr. Roberto Corti and colleagues from the cardiovascular centre, University Hospital, Zurich, observed the activity of endothelial cells, which line the arteries, and platelets, which are involved in the formation of blood clots.

Two hours after eating dark chocolate ultra-sound scans showed that the “smoothness” of blood flow had been “significantly” improved. “This effect lasted for eight hours.

Eating white chocolate had no effect.

Dr.Corti says in the journal *Heart* that dark chocolate has more antioxidants per gram than other foods, including red wine and berry fruits.

He says that while chocolate is high in fat “a small daily treat of dark chocolate may beneficially affect vascular health.”

- Daily Telegraph