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# Dark chocolate good for heart: Swiss study

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

**LONDON** — A couple of squares of 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 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 ultrasound 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 white chocolate is high in fat "a small daily treat of dark chocolate may beneficially affect vascular health."

— Daily Telegraph