



Center for Successful Aging
California State University, Fullerton
800 North State College Blvd., KHS-011D
Fullerton, CA 92831-3599
csawellness@fullerton.edu

Whole-Person Wellness



CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY
FULLERTON



Heart Healthy Benefits of Dark Chocolate

1. Dark chocolate is beneficial for health, but milk chocolate and white chocolate are not. The milk content in milk chocolate blocks the antioxidant effects of chocolate and white chocolate is missing the main plant chemical that is beneficial for health.
2. Dark chocolate is generally lower in calories than milk chocolate because of its lower sugar content.
3. Dark chocolate contains plant chemicals called flavonoids which are known to lower blood pressure, increase antioxidant activity, improve cholesterol levels and improve coronary artery function. Dark chocolate and cocoa are also associated with reduced risk for heart attacks, strokes, and death from heart disease.
4. Flavonoids are present in many healthy foods, but dark chocolate is one of the richest sources. Flavonoids found in chocolate are said to act like aspirin in the way they prevent blood clotting that can lead to heart attacks and strokes.
5. Dark chocolate is also known to be high in anti-oxidants. Two tablespoons of dark chocolate have more anti-oxidants than four cups of green tea.
6. A 1-oz square of dark chocolate a day is healthy. More than that can promote weight gain which can offset cardiovascular benefits.
7. Look for dark chocolate that has 70% or higher cocoa content and lists cocoa or chocolate liquor as the first ingredient, not sugar.

There are general recommendations and may not be appropriate for everyone. Please consult with your healthcare provider regarding your individual needs.

