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Go Over to the Dark Side. Of Chocolate, That Is

**Weekly chocolate consumption helps heart
If a little is good, then a lot is ... worse?**



That is the less-is-more conclusion of a new study of older Swedish women that found that eating high-quality chocolate once or twice a week is good for the heart, but eating it too much is not. The study is highly relevant as nearly 6 million Americans have heart failure and one in four women will die from heart disease, according to the National Institute of Health.

The nine-year study of women ages 48 to 83 found that those who ate a small amount of Swedish chocolate once or twice a week had a one-third lower risk of developing heart failure. Those who ate it daily received no protective benefit. Women who ate chocolate a couple of times a month also showed some benefit, but not as much as the weekly group.

Six Benefits of Dark Chocolate

At any age, recent studies have shown, dark chocolate may:

1. Lower blood pressure by dilating blood vessels.
2. Reduce the risk of diabetes by reducing blood sugar and insulin.
3. Activate enzymes that eliminate cancer causing carcinogens and mutagens.
4. Reduce the risk of blood clots and strokes by inhibiting the clumping of blood platelets.
5. Keep cholesterol levels stable or even slightly improve them.
6. Enhance cognitive function by increasing blood flow in the brain.

Also significant was the quality of chocolate the women consumed, which had a higher amount of cocoa solids than the average American chocolate. Swedish milk chocolate contains 30 percent cocoa solids, while dark chocolate contains 35 percent. By comparison, U.S. standards for dark chocolate require only 15 percent cocoa solids—half that of Swedish milk chocolate.

That doesn't mean American women need to eat twice as much dark chocolate to protect their hearts, cautions Linda Van Horn, professor of preventive medicine at Northwestern University's Feinberg School of Medicine. "Chocolate is not magical and does not work in isolation," she says. A diet that is high in fiber, fruits and vegetables, fish "and a little chocolate," she adds, is best for avoiding weight gain and preventing heart disease.

The study, published online this month in the journal *Circulation: Heart Failure*, was conducted by researchers from Harvard University and Sweden's Institute of Environmental Medicine. They looked at the heart failure rates of nearly 32,000 women who had filled out food consumption questionnaires as part of a Swedish mammography study.

The study found that women who ate a small portion—about two-thirds of an ounce to an ounce—of high-quality chocolate once or twice a week had a 32 percent lower risk of developing heart failure.

(Continued on page 4)



Let's Talk

Dr. Jerry Shapiro

It is hard for me to believe that fall is beginning already. Once again I will be writing about why all should get a flu shot along with some of the other immunizations. I will also be spending some time on Fish Oil and last but not least the arrival of our boxed Christmas Cards.

For some it is urgent that they receive a flu shot. This group would include Pregnant Women, the elderly and those with Chronic Disease states. At Uptown we try to make it easy and economical. There is never an appointment needed if you would just like to walk in between the hours of 10:00 AM and 4:30 PM on Monday thru Friday. If you are part of an office team and would like us to visit your office the only requirement is that you have 10 or more employees and we will come to your office and administer the flu shots there. This year once again we are offering the flu shots at \$23.00 and for the first time we are offering flu mist (for those of you who do not like needles) at \$35.00. The major difference is that the flu shot is not a live vaccine so you can not get sick from taking it. The nasal mist is a live vaccine so you will

probably get some flu-like symptoms after receiving it. We will once again be having a drawing for two prizes for those who receive their immunization at Uptown. They will be a \$50.00 gift certificate for Mendocino Farms and Blimpies. You get to decide which basket you put your form in. At the same time you can receive a pneumococcal shot which is good for 5 years. We also offer hepatitis vaccine or Zostivax which you would need an appointment for.

Fish Oil is very important to your health. Those women taking hormone replacement therapy and/or birth control pills should be supplementing their diets with a significant dose of Fish Oil. Also those of you with heart disease, diabetes or arthritis should also be taking a quality fish oil. Unfortunately not all fish oils are made alike. We carry several alternatives. The ones we recommend are those produced from natural sources with no preservatives or mercury contamination. Taking this product can greatly improve the quality of your health, especially in the area of pain relief.

Last but not least we will be getting our boxed Christmas Cards by the end of October. As always we will be selling them at a 50% discount from the get go. Also the first week that we have them out there will be an additional 10% discount as well. We at Uptown hope you have a health-filled October and will be writing to you again next month.

Six Things Never to Say to a Police Officer During a Traffic Stop

Motorists rarely talk their way out of traffic tickets—but they do sometimes talk their way into them. They say things that annoy or anger police officers who might otherwise have let them off with a warning. Six things never to say to a police officer when you're pulled over...



- "Whatever." Officers feel disrespected when drivers dismiss them with a casual "whatever." That disrespect virtually ensures that they will receive tickets.
- "I wasn't speeding." Police officers are lied to so often that they tend to assume claims such as "I wasn't speeding" or "I didn't run that light" are dishonest. They even might interpret such denials as accusations that they are lying or incompetent. Drivers are more likely to be let off with warnings when they admit that they did something wrong. Do not admit to an infraction if you truly believe you are innocent, however.
- "I know the mayor." Never say to a police officer, "I know the mayor," "I know your captain" or "I know my rights."

Police officers aren't afraid of your powerful friends, and attempting such a power play increases the odds that the officer will write a ticket.

- "I'm calling my lawyer." Saying that you intend to call your lawyer will not scare a police officer—it will just annoy him/her. Police officers deal with lawyers all the time and are not frightened by them. It's even worse to tell a police officer that you are a lawyer or are married to one—some police officers may relish the opportunity to write you a ticket.
- "I'm headed to the DMV." You would be amazed how often police officers hear, "I'm headed to the inspection station" or "to the DMV" when they pull over a vehicle that has an expired inspection sticker or registration. They hear it so often, in fact, that they assume it's a lie. The one "I'm headed to" that might get you out of a ticket is "I'm headed to the hospital"—but only if someone in the car truly looks injured, ill, or about to give birth and only if you actually intend to drive to the hospital.
- "Others were driving faster." The fact that many drivers break the rules doesn't mean that there aren't any rules. A police officer wouldn't let a burglar go just because other burglars have gotten away with their crimes. Making this argument shows a lack of contrition, increasing the odds that the officer will write a ticket.



Hints from JoAnn

Many historians believe that the first eyeglasses were invented in Italy around 1284. Throughout the 1300s, eyeglasses became a symbol of wealth and power, since only the rich could afford this luxury.

In 1456, Gutenberg invented the printing press, which made books available...and which created a market for reading glasses. Gradually, eyeglasses became an important part of everyday life for even the most common people.

If spectacles are part of your daily life, here are ways to care for them...

Cheers to Your Specs! If you're at a bar and you want to see who's paying for your drink, clean your eyeglasses with a little vodka on a soft cloth.

Fog Prevention. Smear a tiny dollop of foam shaving cream or a drop of liquid dish detergent or non-gel toothpaste on both sides of your eyeglasses, and wipe it off with a soft cloth (or you can just spit on them, the way scuba divers do). Doing this leaves a very thin, invisible coating on the lenses...which will help fend off moisture...which will prevent the glasses from fogging up each time you come out of the cold or while cooking.

Fast Fix for Scratches. If your glasses' plastic lenses are scratched, spray Pledge furniture polish on both sides of the lenses. Rub the polish in, then wipe it off with a soft cloth.

Temporary Screw Replacement.

• If you lose one of those tiny screws that hold your glasses together, you can fix it temporarily. Here's what to do—thread a piece of dental floss through the holes that the screw goes through. Then knot the floss and cut off the excess. Dental floss is strong and should hold your glasses together until you can replace the screw.

• If you don't have dental floss, take a twist tie (like you use to close garbage bags), and peel off the outer paper or plastic. Thread the thin little wire through the screw holes of the eyeglasses, and twist it closed. Cut off any excess wire so that it will be safe to wear the glasses until you can replace the screw.

• Of course, you can always use a nerdy-looking small safety pin (or a toothpick...or a wooden match) to keep your glasses together until you can replace the screw.

Loose Screws Sink Ships

• If you can do delicate work with a tiny screwdriver, then unscrew the screws on each side of the glasses 3/4 of the way. Apply a coat of colorless nail polish to the threads of each screw, and then tighten them. This procedure will prevent the screws from getting loose again.

• If the screws are popping out and you don't have a tiny screwdriver, press a pencil eraser against each screw and turn the pencil (remember—lefty-loosey, righty-tighty). The eraser is non-slippery, so it will provide enough traction to get the screws out. Apply clear nail polish to the heads of the little screws and then tighten the screws back into place



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A SIGN OF THE TIMES

EVENINGS AT 7 IN THE PARISH HALL	
MON	ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS
TUE	ABUSED SPOUSES
WED	EATING DISORDERS
THU	SAY NO TO DRUGS
FRI	TEEN SUICIDE WATCH
SAT	SOUP KITCHEN
SUNDAY SERMON 9 A.M. "AMERICA'S JOYOUS FUTURE"	

(Continued from page 1)

Those who had one to three servings a month had a 26 percent lower risk.

Those who ate one serving or more daily didn't appear to gain any protective benefit.

Why the bad news about eating chocolate daily? Lead researcher Murray Mittleman, M.D., of Harvard Medical School, thinks it could be because the extra calories lead to weight gain or a less nutritious diet, canceling out chocolate's benefits.

However, the study noted that including small amounts of dark chocolate in the diet could help lower blood pressure and that some studies indicate the flavonoids in chocolate help improve heart blood vessel function.

Seems the archetypical Swedish proverb lagom är bäst, or "the right amount is best," holds true for chocolate as well.

Bitter Is Best

Cocoa beans are processed into cocoa solids and cocoa butter. The solids contain the antioxidants. The higher the percentage of cocoa content listed on a wrapper, the more antioxidants inside.

The purest commercial varieties, like unsweetened baking chocolate, taste bitter, which means that most chocolate consumed contains sugar. Most ingredients added to chocolate raise its caloric and fat content and lower its antioxidants. Milk chocolate also contains milk powder or condensed milk, which may interfere with the absorption of antioxidants. "White chocolate" contains cocoa butter, sugar and milk but no cocoa solids—in other words, zero antioxidants.

Phone Getting Dusty?

How to Clean It...

Dampen a soft cloth with distilled white vinegar and wipe your telephone clean. Be sure to thoroughly clean the handset, earpiece and mouthpiece, where most germs congregate.

For hard-to-reach areas around the buttons, use a cotton swab that's been dipped in distilled white vinegar. The smell will disappear in a few minutes.



October is
Breast Cancer Month



Faster or Farther? Walk This Way

If you are just beginning an exercise routine—whether your goal is to lose weight, improve cardiovascular health or build muscle—you should definitely concentrate on distance first. One important reason is that you will be less likely to get injured.

Also, by focusing on distance, you'll probably burn more calories overall. That's because you will be able to sustain a moderate walking pace (about three miles per hour) longer than you could sustain a faster pace. You may be surprised to learn that the average person burns about 120 calories per mile no matter how quickly she or he covers that mile. So, if you can walk three miles at a moderate pace, it will take you about an hour and you'll burn about 360 calories. But if you walk at a very brisk pace of four miles per hour yet are unable to keep it up for more than two miles, you will spend only 30 minutes walking and will burn just 240 calories.

You may have heard of a recent study in *The Journal of the American Medical Association* that found that faster gait is associated with higher survival rates in older adults. But don't rush out to buy jogging sneakers just yet. Researchers found that everyone has her own best natural walking speed. Since walking uses various vital organ systems, including the circulatory and respiratory systems, slowing down with age may indicate that one of these systems is damaged. So, instead of focusing specifically on increasing your walking speed to live longer, commit to improving your overall health through a nutritious diet and regular moderate exercise. By doing so, your natural walking speed most likely will increase as well.

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