

10 Reasons to Fall in Love with Dark Chocolate

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It's true: rich, velvety smooth dark chocolate is actually good for you. If enjoyed in moderation and in its own semi-natural state (sorry yummy caramel and crunchy pretzels), it can provide numerous health benefits. Sure, it may not be as sweet as creamy milk chocolate, but it's not loaded with other fats and sugars.

And since everyone, partnered-up or not, will likely enjoy chocolate on Valentine's Day, celebrate the most important person in your life (hint: it's you).

Think it's too good to be true? We beg to differ, which is why we asked several experts to weigh in on why we should love the not-so-sweet stuff. Be mindful of the calorie count, aim for the highest quality, and most importantly, enjoy every single, luscious bite:

IT HELPS YOU LOSE WEIGHT

Can eating dark chocolate actually help you shed those pesky pounds? According to some experts, the answer is a delightful yes. "A small amount of dark chocolate every now and then can slow down digestion so you feel fuller longer and eat less at your next meal," explains **Franci Cohen, a New York City-based fitness instructor**.

"Dark chocolate is full of monounsaturated fatty acids (MUFAs), which studies have linked to increased metabolic rate. It also helps control cravings."

However, the trick is not to overdo it. Like with any kind of food, moderation is crucial to avoid packing on the calories. One dietician suggests two large tasting squares of 70 percent cacao or greater. Of course, this also means you'll need to cut down on your other guilty pleasures you may be snacking on throughout the day, but who's complaining?