

## Chocolate good for us ?

Categories : [Health talks with Dr Chireka](#)

Date : 16th September 2016

## **Is chocolate good for us after all?**

Your one stop centre for information about health.

<http://docbeecee.co.uk>

**By Dr Brighton Chireka**

---

Growing up in Zimbabwe my favourite or the only chocolate I could afford was called Chomp. Chomp is a brand of chocolate by Cadbury. During the 1970s Chomp bars were sold in Australia with the catchphrase "Ten cents never tasted so good".

This chocolate was affordable so we would buy it each time we get some spare change but we were not allowed to indulge in chocolates. We were rightly told that it was not good for our teeth as it had too much sugar and also that we would put on too much weight due to high fat content in the chocolates.

Research on chocolate is continuing all the time, and some studies are showing that chocolate is good for the heart, circulation and brain. It is also suggested that it may be beneficial in diabetes as shown by the **Luxembourg study**.

## **Luxembourg chocolate consumption study**

Now a study in Luxembourg has come up with interesting findings. This study examined the association of chocolate consumption with insulin resistance. 1153 individuals, aged 18–69 years, were recruited to participate in the study. The results suggested that chocolate consumption may protect against insulin resistance ( insulin resistance leads to diabetes mellitus)

## **Read about diabetes**

<http://docbeecee.co.uk/lets-talk-about-diabetes/>

## **Insulin resistance**

When we eat food it gets absorbed into the bloodstream in the form of sugars such as glucose and other substances. This increase in sugar in the bloodstream signals the pancreas ( gland located behind stomach ) to increase the secretion of a hormone called insulin. This hormone allows for sugar in the blood to move into cells so that can be used for energy.

In insulin resistance the body's cells have a diminished ability to respond to the action of the insulin hormone. To compensate for the insulin resistance, the pancreas secretes more insulin resulting in more insulin. Over time, people with insulin resistance can develop high sugar levels or diabetes as the high insulin levels can no longer compensate for elevated sugars.

## Causes of insulin resistance

It is thought that the principle cause of insulin resistance is obesity. One theory suggests that central obesity (too much fat around the belly) causes the fat cells to become starved of oxygen and die.

It is thought that the body reacts with an inflammatory response which then sets off the start of insulin resistance.

Diets high in saturated fats, trans-fats, refined carbohydrates and processed foods have been closely linked with chronic inflammation disorders and insulin resistance.

## Symptoms of insulin resistance

One of the earliest and most noticeable symptoms of insulin resistance is weight gain, particularly around the middle.

Further symptoms include:

- \* Lethargy
- \* Hunger
- \* Difficulty concentrating (brain fog)
- \* High blood pressure is another common symptom which is caused by high circulating levels of insulin in the blood

If insulin resistance develops into prediabetes or type 2 diabetes, the symptoms will include include increased blood glucose levels and more of the classic symptoms of type 2 diabetes.

## Conclusion

More research is needed before we all rush to indulge in these chocolates. The take home message is that maybe an occasional intake of chocolate ( dark chocolate, with a cocoa percentage of around seventy per cent or more) may be acceptable. However overindulgence will be bad for our health as it will cause us to put on weight which will lead to us getting diabetes. Current research has shown that cocoa can have a beneficial effect with regards to maintaining healthy vascular tone and insulin sensitivity, the reverse is true for sugar. Sadly eating sweetened chocolate is still not good for us !

This article was compiled by **Dr Brighton Chireka** , who is a GP and a blogger based in Kent in the United Kingdom. Feel free to contact him at [info@docbeecee.co.uk](mailto:info@docbeecee.co.uk) and you can read more of his work on his blog at [DR CHIREKA'S BLOG](#)

**Disclaimer:** This article is for information only and should not be used for the diagnosis or treatment of medical conditions. Dr Chireka has used all reasonable care in compiling the information but makes no warranty as to its accuracy. Consult a doctor or other healthcare professionals for a diagnosis and treatment of medical conditions. Views expressed here are personal and do not in any way , shape or form represent the views of organisations that Dr Chireka work for or is associated with.

Reference :

[LUXEMBOURG STUDY](#)