

The dark chocolate version of Father Christmas is most filling

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New research at the Faculty of Life Sciences (LIFE) at the University of Copenhagen – shows that dark chocolate is far more filling than milk chocolate, lessening our craving for sweet, salty and fatty foods. In other words, eating dark chocolate may be an efficient way to keep your weight down over Christmas.

We have known for a long time that it is healthier to eat dark chocolate, but now scientists at the Department of Human Nutrition at LIFE, University of Copenhagen, have found that dark chocolate also gives more of a feeling of satiety than milk chocolate.

To compare the effects of dark and milk chocolate on both appetite and subsequent calorie intake, 16 young and healthy men of normal weight who all liked both dark and milk chocolate took part in a so-called crossover experiment. This meant that they reported for two separate sessions, the first time testing the dark chocolate, and the second time the milk chocolate.

They had all fasted for 12 hours beforehand and were offered 100g of chocolate, which they consumed in the course of 15 minutes. The calorific content was virtually the same for the milk and dark chocolate.

During the following 5 hours, participants were asked to register their appetite every half hour, i.e. their hunger, satiety, craving for special foods and how they liked the chocolate.

Two and a half hours after eating the chocolate, participants were offered pizza ad lib.

They were instructed to eat until they felt comfortably satiated. After the meal, the individuals' calorie intake was registered.

The results were significant. The calorie intake at the subsequent meal where they could eat as much pizza as they liked was 15 per cent lower when they had eaten dark chocolate beforehand.

The participants also stated that the plain chocolate made them feel less like eating sweet, salty or fatty foods.

So apart from providing us with the healthier fatty acids and many antioxidants, dark chocolate can now also help us steer clear of all the sweet, salty and fattening Christmas foods.

Source: University of Copenhagen

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