

Study asks 'Is dark chocolate good for you?'

May 6 2010

Volunteers are to have chocolate delivered to their homes and be encouraged to eat 50g of it every day for eight weeks as part of a new research study.

Researchers at Queen's University Belfast, funded by Northern Ireland Chest, Heart & Stroke and the NI Research and Development Office, are to study 110 people with high blood pressure for the opening stage of a three-year project starting in August.

The aim is to discover if a high fruit and vegetable [diet](#) incorporating [dark chocolate](#) and berries - which are all rich in important compounds called polyphenols - is better for the cardiovascular system than a diet low in fruit and vegetables.

Dr Pascal McKeown from Queen's School of Medicine, Dentistry and Biomedical Sciences who is leading the study, said: "The important thing to stress is that the chocolate we will be using will be very high in cocoa - at least 70 per cent. Standard milk chocolate has nothing like the polyphenol content of dark chocolate.

"One group of patients will be put on a low polyphenol diet - probably the average UK diet, since most people tend to eat only two portions of fruit and vegetables per day. Another group will be encouraged to eat six portions of fruit and vegetables, including one portion of berries, each day, together with the 50g of dark [chocolate](#). We will examine people's blood vessel health and the stickiness of their blood at the start and end of the study to discover whether a diet rich in polyphenols can reduce

the risk of developing heart disease."

Andrew Dougal, Chief Executive of NI Chest, [Heart](#) & Stroke (NICHS), said: "This is a great example of high quality research which has the potential to benefit first and foremost the people of Northern Ireland, but also has applications further afield. We hope it will provide a solid evidence base for fine-tuning the government's advice on healthy eating."

NICHS has provided funding of £32,000 for the project. One of the researchers, Dr Rebecca Noad, has also secured a Fellowship award from the Department of Health's Research and Development Office.

Provided by Queen's University Belfast

Citation: Study asks 'Is dark chocolate good for you?' (2010, May 6) retrieved 24 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2010-05-dark-chocolate-good.html>

<p>This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.</p>
