

Eating chocolate cuts risk of heart disease

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Chocolate. Credit: photoplasia from Flickr Creative Commons

(Medical Xpress) -- The researchers compiled a systematic review of seven studies using data from 114,000 patients and found that people who consumed the most chocolate had a 37 per cent lower risk of developing heart disease and a 29 per cent lower risk of suffering a stroke than those who consumed less chocolate.

The studies looked at the consumption of [dark chocolate](#) as well as [milk chocolate](#), chocolate drinks and other chocolate confectionaries.

Although the analysis suggests a certain benefit to eating higher quantities of chocolate, the findings still need to be interpreted with caution, in particular because commercially available chocolate is very calorific and eating too much of it could in itself lead to weight gain, which increases various [health risks](#).

Lead author, Dr. Oscar Franco, from the Department of Public Health and Primary Care, said: “Chocolate may be beneficial, but it should be eaten in a moderate way, not in large quantities and not in binges,” he said. “If it is consumed in large quantities, any beneficial effect is going to disappear.”

However, they conclude that, given the health benefits of eating chocolate, initiatives to reduce the current fat and sugar content in most chocolate products should be explored.

The World Health Organisation predicts that by 2030, nearly 23.6 million people will die from [heart disease](#). Furthermore, about a fifth of the world’s adult population are thought to have metabolic syndrome, a cluster of factors associated with an increased risk of type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease.

Provided by University of Cambridge

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