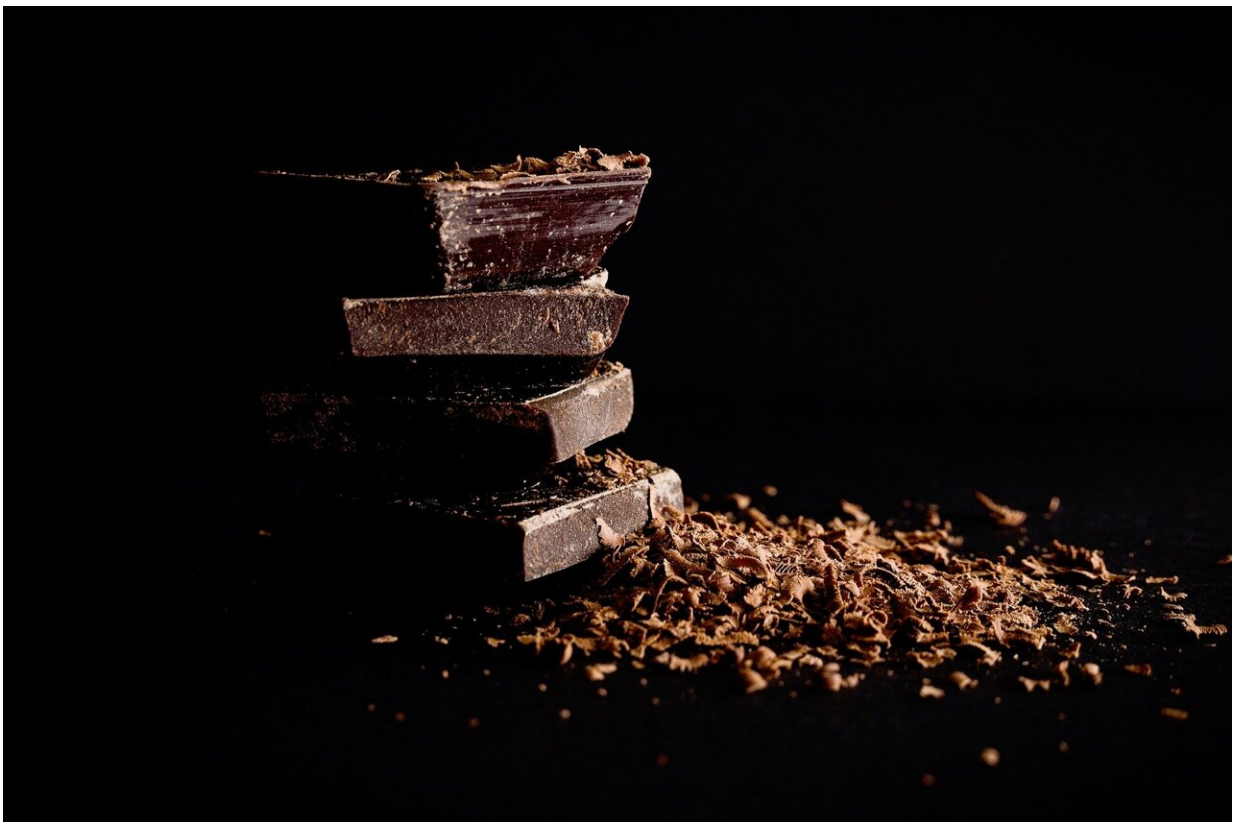


# Association found between dark chocolate consumption, reduced risk of essential hypertension

January 22 2024, by Bob Yirka

---



Credit: Pixabay/CC0 Public Domain

A team of cardiologists at Shaoxing People's Hospital, working with a colleague from Zhuji People's Hospital, both in China, has found an

association between consumption of dark chocolate and reductions in the risk of essential hypertension.

In their paper [published](#) in the journal *Scientific Reports*, the group describes how they used Mendelian randomization to discover more about the associations between [consumption](#) of dark [chocolate](#) and hypertension.

Hypertension is a term used to describe chronic high blood pressure. The term essential hypertension is used when the source of the cause is unknown. Over the past several years there have been reports of dark chocolate consumption providing certain health benefits, due to its flavanol content. Some of those claimed benefits have included reducing inflammation, and other factors involved in coronary disease.

In this new study, the research team wondered if it was possible that consumption of dark chocolate could reduce essential hypertension, which has been implicated in a host of maladies, from strokes to heart attacks.

The work by the team involved the use of a technique called Mendelian randomization—an epidemiological methodology named after Gregor Mendel. It involves studying differences in [genetic profiles](#) in a way that shows that a given intervention was what caused a given effect—the method has been promoted due to its ability to reduce the risk of reverse causation.

Using the method on data obtained from the MRC Integrative Epidemiology Unit, which included genetic profiles of 64,945 people of European descent, the team looked for associations between [health benefits](#) of dark chocolate consumption and ailments such as [heart failure](#), [blood clots](#), stroke, coronary heart disease and essential hypertension.

In looking at their data, the researchers found what they describe as a significant association between regular dark chocolate consumption and reductions in the risk of essential hypertension—and some association between dark chocolate consumption and reductions in the risk of venous thromboembolism.

On the other hand, the team found no associations between dark chocolate consumption and any of the other ailments. They suggest their findings are strong enough to warrant further study of dark chocolate and its components to find out if it, or some of its ingredients, might be useful for the treatment of essential hypertension.

**More information:** Juntao Yang et al, Dark chocolate intake and cardiovascular diseases: a Mendelian randomization study, *Scientific Reports* (2024). [DOI: 10.1038/s41598-023-50351-6](https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-023-50351-6)

© 2024 Science X Network

Citation: Association found between dark chocolate consumption, reduced risk of essential hypertension (2024, January 22) retrieved 28 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2024-01-association-dark-chocolate-consumption-essential.html>

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.