

## For the Love of Chocolate

Now that Valentines Day is over, let's focus on what sweets you got from your sweetie. If you are one of the millions of people who love chocolate, rejoice! There is a health benefit from consuming this delectable and delicious treat.

Chocolate contains many different components that make people fall in love with it. Most people think that it is the sugar that they crave, or the caffeine kick. Be aware that caffeine is a stimulant and can cause a hormone imbalance. While that may be true for some people, there are some goodies in chocolate.

Chocolate actually contains the relaxing mineral, magnesium. Most people associate magnesium with calcium. The body needs more calcium than magnesium at a ratio of 32:1. Calcium and magnesium are only two minerals of the many minerals and trace minerals that make up the human body.

One of the many benefits of magnesium is that "feel good" feeling. Magnesium actually calms the nerves and relaxes muscles. This is why millions of women crave chocolate at certain times of the month. When chocolate is eaten, the magnesium causes the consumer to feel less irritable and more relaxed.

There are good chocolates and bad chocolates. A bad chocolate is defined as one that has very little chocolate and a lot of additives. These chocolates should be avoided if you are looking for the "happy and satisfied" feeling that good chocolate can create.

Many of the cheaper brands of chocolate contain fillers and additives, including high fructose corn



syrup. High fructose corn syrup recently made headlines for its secondary component. It seems that over 50% of the high fructose corn syrup contains mercury.

Good chocolate has only a few key ingredients without fillers and artificial flavors. There are even terrific tasting chocolate bars without a lot of sugar. Imagine, eating a delicious chocolate, without raising your blood sugar.

Sugar goes by many names. In fact there are 42 separate names for sugar so that it can be used in commercial foods. By naming sugar something other than sugar, most people do not realize that they are in fact consuming sugar.

The average American consumes 120 pounds of sugar a year, a low estimate. Before there was packaged food, the average sugar consumption was 30 pounds a year. Sugar has been implicated in many degenerative health conditions from Diabetes to Heart Disease. There are at least 146 reasons to not make your diet high in sugar.

A dietary analysis can easily spot if

you are consuming too much sugar. Most people are not aware of the amount of sugar they consume every day. The key is the total amount of sugar that you consume in ratio to the fats and proteins that you eat.

If you love to eat breads and pasta, or rice and potatoes, you are feeding your body sugar. If you skip meals, you are altering your blood sugar, and will have a stronger desire to eat sugar. If you drink fruit juice, wine or pop, you are consuming liquid sugar.

The body has to use additional stored vitamins in order to efficiently metabolize sugar, deleting key reserves, like magnesium and the whole Vitamin B complex. When you eat more sugar than is needed by your body, weight gain is inevitable. Excess consumed sugars are stored as unwanted body fat.

It is the desire for magnesium that can drive the urge to eat chocolate. This desire indicates a mineral deficiency of magnesium, and its partner, calcium. Magnesium helps the body metabolize fats, proteins and sugars, as well as minerals and vitamins, like Vitamin D. Where there is a magnesium deficiency, there are other missing nutrients too.

Sugar issues and weight issues also indicate a hormone imbalance. When hormones are in balance the body does not have unwanted weight or different food cravings. The correct nutritional supply of needed vitamins and minerals need to be present in order for the body to have balanced hormones.

Simple non-invasive tests are available to determine nutritional deficiencies. Dietary analysis and a review of lifestyle habits can also reveal if you have sugar handling issues or a hormone imbalance. You do not have to live with an over-

load of sugar, or guilt over eating chocolate. It is possible to have your chocolate and enjoy it too, especially if your body has all the vitamins, minerals and trace minerals that it needs.

Dr. Carol Ann Fischer, D.C., N.D. is a unique



Chiropractic Holistic Wellness Consultant in Livonia, Michigan. She has been in private practice for over 24 years, with specialized training in natural hormone evaluation & therapy, diet modification, nutrition, weight loss, gentle chiropractic, detoxification,

wellness care, and homeopathy. Her goal is to help people to live happy, healthy and stress free. For more information on Dr. Fischer or her free public workshops on hormones, weight loss, stress, and wellness visit [www.TLCHolisticWellness.com](http://www.TLCHolisticWellness.com) or contact her by email at [tlc4health@sbcglobal.net](mailto:tlc4health@sbcglobal.net) or by phone at 734-664-0339.

Disclaimer: The recommendations in this article are not to be taken as medical advice.



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