

# Sweet About Chocolate



Attention, sweet teeth! Eating chocolate may not be as bad for your teeth as commonly thought.

## A quick treat

When it comes to sweets and your teeth, time is of the essence. Chewy treats and hard candy stay in the mouth longer than most foods, allowing cavity-causing bacteria to thrive. Chocolate, on the other hand, dissolves easily, which means the sugar has less contact with your teeth.

## Too much of a good thing

Despite its advantages over other candies, chocolate is still full of sugar, so make sure to indulge responsibly.

## Chocolate of the future

As researchers work to unlock the secrets of the cocoa bean, some studies have observed anti-cavity effects of tannins and flavanols, two natural compounds found in the bean. Of course, the cocoa-derived drinks used in the studies aren't what you'll find at the grocery store, but this research may offer the possibility of dentist-approved candy bars in the future.

**Did you know** that 79% of dentists who hand out candy on Halloween choose chocolate? Only 13% give out hard candy or lollipops.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Delta Dental Plans Association's 2011 Tricky Treats survey included more than 250 dentists.

### If you're craving chocolate

- Choose dark chocolate that's low in sugar
- Wash it down with plain milk or water
- Brush your teeth after eating

### Stay away from

- Chocolate with nougat or caramel filling
- Cookie-based chocolate bars
- Chocolate-flavored cereals or cakes

#### Tooth-friendly hot cocoa

2 tsp. unsweetened cocoa powder

2 tsp. xylitol

1 cup milk

1/2 tsp. vanilla extract

Mix cocoa and xylitol in a mug. In a separate container, heat milk until hot (about a minute and a half in the microwave). Slowly pour milk into the powdered mixture, stirring continuously, and then add vanilla extract. Enjoy!



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