

# MINUTE NUTRITION NEWS

February 2013



## February: The Month of Chocolate



February is the month of love...and chocolate! You may have heard that this popular treat is good for your heart health, but do you know why? In this issue, follow the journey of a cocoa bean and learn how chocolate can be part of a healthy diet.

### Does chocolate really have benefits for my health?

Reports of health benefits around eating chocolate have mostly been linked to a compound called flavanols. Flavanols exist naturally in raw cocoa beans.

Some studies looking at people who ate cocoa-containing foods have suggested that these foods may be able to help reduce our risk of heart disease. Specifically, it may help decrease the amount of plaque that builds up in our arteries and may also help lower blood pressure.

### How do I pick the right type of chocolate?

There are three main types of chocolate: dark, milk and white chocolate. The difference between the three lies in the amount of chocolate liquor that is present. (Read the box for more details.) Dark chocolate usually has the most, milk chocolate with less and white chocolate with none.

Even though dark chocolate contains the most chocolate liquor, that does not guarantee a high flavanol content. The manufacturing process of chocolate may strip away most of the flavanols that were originally in the raw cocoa beans. However, dark chocolate is still likely to provide you with the most flavanols, if any, out of all three types.

### A Dietitian's Advice?

Chocolate, particularly dark chocolate, may have benefits on heart health because of their potential flavanol content. However, as consumers, it is impossible to know exactly how much is in a chocolate bar. Your best bet would be to enjoy a small piece of dark chocolate once in a while as a part of a healthy, balanced diet. Enjoy other flavanol-rich foods more often such as apples, cherries, apricots, peaches, blackberries, and grapes. These foods are lower in calories and provide a wide range of other important nutrients.

Got questions? Meet the clinic's registered dietitian on February 5<sup>th</sup> from 9:30-11am during the recipe demonstration (recipe on the back)!

### The Journey of a Cocoa Bean

Cocoa beans are harvested from cacao trees on farms.



Farmers ferment the beans by putting them in the sun, covered by banana leaves or in a box.



The beans are delivered to chocolate factories.



Factory workers first roast the beans under high temperatures to bring out the smell of chocolate.



Next, factory workers grind the beans until it becomes a liquid called chocolate liquor. Despite its name, there is no alcohol content in chocolate liquor.



Factory workers then put some of the chocolate liquor under a large press that separates it into cocoa powder and cocoa butter.



From here, factory workers will mix their own secret blend of chocolate liquor, cocoa powder, cocoa butter, sugar and other ingredients to create chocolate.

# RECIPE OF THE MONTH

February 2013

## Valentine Quinoa Brownies

Treat yourself or your loved ones to a healthier valentine's day treat this year. These brownies offer a nice twist to traditional recipes. They are low in fat and will surely satisfy your chocolate cravings!



**Makes 16 servings**  
(2"x2" hearts)

Prep Time: 5 minutes  
Cook Time: 34 minutes

### Ingredients:

½ cup quinoa  
¾ cup sugar  
½ cup cocoa powder, low-fat, unsweetened  
1 tsp baking powder  
¼ cup 2% milk  
2 tbsp applesauce  
2 eggs  
1tsp vanilla

### Nutrition Facts (values are approximate)

Per serving

Amount	% Daily Value
<b>Calories 75</b>	
<b>Fat 1.4 g</b>	2 %
Saturated 0.5 g + Trans 0 g	3 %
<b>Cholesterol 24 mg</b>	8 %
<b>Sodium 30 mg</b>	1 %
<b>Potassium 86 mg</b>	2 %
<b>Carbohydrate 15 g</b>	5 %
Fibre 1 g	4 %
Sugar 10 g	
<b>Protein 2 g</b>	
<b>Vitamin C</b>	0 %
<b>Calcium</b>	2 %
<b>Iron</b>	5 %

### Directions:

1. In a pot, bring quinoa and 1 cup water to a boil. Reduce to a simmer, cover and cook until all the water is absorbed (about 15-20 minutes). Transfer to a bowl and cool to room temperature.
2. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Spray 8-inch square pan with cooking spray.
3. Place quinoa, sugar, cocoa, baking powder, milk, applesauce, eggs and vanilla in a food processor. Process until smooth and pour into the pan.
4. Place pan into the centre of oven and bake for 30-35 minutes.
5. Cool the brownies in the pan. Use heart-shaped cookie cutters to cut into 16 pieces.
6. Serve and enjoy!