

# Did You Know?

## The Truths About Chocolate

Chocolate...it's real simple, right? You either love it or you hate it. If only it were that simple. Here are some facts that may change the minds of a few chocoholics and convert some chocolate haters.

- ❖ Chocolate originally comes from a Mayan and Aztec drink called "chocolatl", a cold drink made from cocoa beans, vanilla, honey, and spices. When brought back to Europe by the Spaniards, chocolate remained a drink popular only for men. It wasn't until the 19<sup>th</sup> century that chocolate became popular in an eatable (rather than drinkable) form as we know it today.
- ❖ The melting point of cocoa is just below human temperature, which is why it melts in your mouth.
- ❖ Theobromine, a mild stimulant found in chocolate, can be toxic or even lethal to domestic animals such as dogs and cats due to its affect on their kidneys, heart, and central nervous system.
- ❖ White chocolate is not even chocolate! It is made from whole milk, sugar, and cocoa butter, but no cocoa solids. In fact, imitation white chocolate is made with vegetable oil rather than cocoa butter.
- ❖ Chocolate contains anandamides, chemicals that make us feel good, and phenylethylamine, a mood elevator. Also, the feeling of chocolate melting in our mouths causes us to release endorphins, our bodies' "feel good" chemicals.
- ❖ Chocolate is a rich source of magnesium and phosphorous. It also contains small quantities of potassium, calcium, zinc, iron, and antioxidants.
- ❖ There is no such thing as a "chocoholic". Research shows there are no characteristics of addiction, such as chemical changes in the brain or withdrawal, associated with chocolate consumption

Chocolate does not cause cavities. In fact, the cocoa butter in chocolate can help protect your teeth by coating them and preventing plaque from forming.

The information from this "Did You Know" was found at:

[http://www.arabia.msn.com/Family\\_Home/women78/](http://www.arabia.msn.com/Family_Home/women78/)

This was brought to you by The Resource Referral Program at Everywoman's Center as part of a bi-weekly awareness project. R/R is located in the basement of Wilder Hall or you can reach us at 545-0883. For more informational sheets and Everywoman's Center details, please visit <http://www.umass.edu/mycenter>.