

Love that chocolate, despite its calories

Love at first bite — and if it tastes this good, this rich, this creamy, then it must be bad for us or at least fattening.

I love chocolate. Doesn't everyone? Many have even admitted to being "chocololics." What makes so many people crave chocolate? Probably because it tastes so good and has such pleasant associations. The mild caffeine in chocolate perks you up and, as a carbohydrate, it calms you down at the same time — such nice qualities.

But chocolate has an aftertaste: Many chocolate lovers suffer from chocolate-covered guilt and worry about getting fat or developing facial blemishes. Well, relax. In reasonable quantities it isn't so bad for you after all.

CHOCOLATE ISN'T isn't entirely "empty" calories. It does contain important nutrients including Vitamin A, calcium, iron, magnesium, potassium and several B-complex vitamins such as niacin, riboflavin, thiamine and folic acid.

To do away with the old myth — chocolate doesn't cause blemishes, according to medical experts. The skin disorder is caused by hormonal changes in the body, not by what we eat.



Lite success

Florine Mark

Chocolate does contain a lot of calories, however — about 150 calories to the ounce, and most of those calories are from saturated fat. For the sake of your health and your waistline, you should keep an eye on both fat and calories. Moderation is the key.

Don't tempt yourself by keeping a quart of double chocolate chip ice cream in the freezer or a box of assorted chocolates on hand for "chocolate attacks."

Indulge yourself occasionally. Know that you can have chocolate and that it's OK to eat in moderation. If you deprive yourself, you may go overboard and binge later — which will only make you feel worse.

Earn brownie points by learning to satisfy your chocolate cravings and control your calorie intake at the same time. When a chocolate craving develops, try a slice of chocolate peanut butter pie or the all-time favorite — chewy brownies. As a treat in the evening, enjoy cappuccino for dessert. These delicious recipes are light in fat, low in calories and sure to satisfy any chocolate lover.

CHOCOLATE PEANUT BUTTER PIE
Makes 8 Servings
8 graham crackers (2½-inch squares) crumbled
4 teaspoons margarine, melted
1 envelope instant reduced-calorie

chocolate pudding (four ¼-cup servings)
2 cups cold skim milk
¼ cup peanut butter
1 cup whipped topping
1 ounce chocolate sprinkles

Crumble graham crackers and mix with melted margarine. Press into 9-inch pie pan. Bake at 350 degrees for 8 minutes or until brown. Let crust cool.

In bowl, mix chocolate pudding with skim milk and peanut butter. Let this stand for 5 minutes. Pour into baked and cooled pie crust. Top with whipped topping and decorate with chocolate sprinkles. Refrigerate until chilled and slice into 8 servings.

Each serving provides: ¼ Bread Exchange, ¼ Milk Exchange, ¼ Fat Exchange, ½ Protein Exchange, 55 Optional Calories.
Source: The WW Group, Inc. Recipe Files

CAPPUCCINO MOUSSE
2 teaspoons unflavored gelatin
¼ cup plus 2 tablespoons low-fat milk (1 percent milk fat)
1 ounce semisweet chocolate, grated (reserve 1 teaspoon for garnish)
1½ teaspoons instant espresso coffee powder
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
10 ice cubes
cold water
6 egg whites
1 tablespoon granulated sugar

¼ cup thawed frozen dairy whipped topping, divided

In 1-quart saucepan sprinkle gelatin over milk and let stand for 1 minute to soften; cook over medium heat, stirring constantly, until gelatin is completely dissolved, about 1 minute. Add chocolate, espresso powder and vanilla; cook, stirring constantly, until chocolate is melted.

In large mixing bowl combine ice cubes and enough cold water to cover. Transfer chocolate mixture to medium mixing bowl. Set bowl of chocolate mixture in bowl of ice water and let stand, stirring frequently with a rubber scraper, until mixture is cool to the touch and the consistency of egg whites, about 2 minutes.

Using an electric mixer on medium speed, in large mixing bowl beat egg whites and sugar until soft peaks form; set aside.

Remove bowl of chocolate mixture from ice water. Using a rubber scraper, stir ¼ cup of the whipped topping into the chocolate mixture; fold in ¼ cup whipped topping. Fold in the beaten egg whites, one third at a time.

Into eight 6-ounce dessert dishes spoon an equal amount of the mousse mixture. Refrigerate overnight or at least 2 hours.

To serve, top each portion with 1½ teaspoons of the remaining whipped topping and ¼ teaspoon of the reserved chocolate. Makes 8 servings.

Each serving provides: ½ Protein Exchange; 55 Optional Calories.
Per serving: 67 calories; 4 g protein; 3 g fat; 6 g carbohydrate; 26 mg calcium; 58 mg sodium; 1 mg cholesterol; dietary fiber data not available.

Source: "Weight Watchers Meals in Minutes Cookbook."

BROWNIES

Makes 8 Servings, 1 brownie each

¾ cup cake flour
¼ teaspoon baking soda
2 ounces each chopped walnuts and semisweet chocolate pieces
2 tablespoons water
1 tablespoon unsweetened cocoa
½ cup reduced-calorie margarine (tub)
¼ cup firmly packed light brown sugar
2 eggs
1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Onto sheet of wax paper or paper plate sift together flour and baking soda. In small bowl combine walnuts and 1 tablespoon flour mixture, tossing to coat; set aside.

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In double boiler combine chocolate and water; cook over hot (not boiling)

water until chocolate is melted. Stir in cocoa and set aside.

Using electric mixer at medium speed, in medium mixing bowl cream margarine; add sugar and beat until light and fluffy. Add eggs, 1 at a time, beating well after each addition; beat in chocolate mixture and vanilla, then gradually beat in sifted dry ingredients. Fold in walnuts. Spray 8-by-8-by-2-inch baking pan with nonstick cooking spray and pour batter into pan; bake in middle of center oven rack for 30-35 minutes (until a cake tester, inserted in center, comes out clean). Transfer pan to wire rack and let cool. To serve, cut into 8 equal pieces.

Each serving provides: ¼ Bread Exchange, 1 Fat Exchange, 135 Optional Calories.
Source: Weight Watchers 1988 Engagement Calendar.

Parmesan Puffs prepared quickly

The January issue of Gourmet magazine offers this recipe for "Parmesan Puffs" in the monthly feature "In Short Order."

PARMESAN PUFFS

¼ cup milk
¼ stick (½ cup) unsalted butter
¼ teaspoon salt
¼ cup all-purpose flour
2 large eggs
1 cup freshly grated Parmesan

In a small heavy saucepan combine the milk, ¼ cup water, the butter and the salt and bring the mixture to a boil over high heat. Reduce the heat to moderate, add the flour

all at once, and beat the mixture with a wooden spoon until it leaves the side of the pan and forms a ball. Transfer the mixture to a bowl, whisk in the eggs, 1 at a time, whisking well after each addition, and stir in the Parmesan and pepper to taste. Drop the batter in 8 mounds on a buttered baking sheet and bake the puffs in the upper third of a preheated 400-degree oven for 20 minutes, or until they are crisp and golden. The puffs may be served as an hors d'oeuvre or as an accompaniment to soups, meats and poultry and may be stored overnight in an airtight container. Makes 8 puffs.

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