

Suntheanine *and* DARK CHOCOLATE

A Healthy Combination for Relieving Stress and Tension

by Sherrill Sellman, N.D.

If there were one pleasure that is irresistible to the senses, it would have to be the allure of chocolate. There must be something to it since the average American gleefully devours almost 12 pounds of chocolate a year.

Actually, our irresistible attraction to chocolate has a scientific basis. A recent study proved what chocolate lovers have always known. The savoring of dark chocolate stimulates all regions of the brain more intensely and even longer than did the excitement initiated with kissing. In fact, when results were analyzed, the chocolate buzz lasted as much as four times longer than the most passionate kisses.

Now there is exciting news in the world of dark chocolate. In addition to lighting up the brain with pleasure, modern day scientists have created special chocolate formulas, which have transformed chocolate into much more than just an extremely pleasurable experience. Chocolate has now entered the 21st century as a health-promoting functional food, which not only titillates the taste buds but also delivers antioxidant rich nutrients along with a powerful relaxation-promoting agent.

Today new chocolate creations unite the well-researched health benefits of pure dark chocolate with the amazing calming and relaxing affects from Suntheanine L-theanine, an amino acid found in green tea. These functional food chocolates provide a delicious antidote to our frantic, over-stimulated, sleep-deprived modern lives.

The Health Benefits of Dark Chocolate

Who would have thought that eating dark chocolate would be akin to taking your vitamins? Well, maybe not exactly but the research on its proven health benefits are certainly generating serious attention.

What is it about dark chocolate that gives it its nutritional punch? The answer is flavonoids; powerful antioxidant chemicals that help prevent cell damage, reduce clot formation, and improve blood sugar levels. The cacao plant, which is what chocolate is made from, contains the same antioxidants—including catechins and phenols—found in red wine, apples, onions, and grapes. Pure dark chocolate is such an antioxidant rich food that it contains nearly eight times the amount of antioxidants found in strawberries.

These compounds have been shown to lower blood pressure and help protect against heart disease. Recent studies conducted both in the U.S. and Europe enthusiastically supports chocolate's beneficial effects on the cardiovascular system.

One study found that a specific kind of flavonoids, called

epicatechins, in cocoa helps the body process nitric oxide (NO), a compound critical for healthy blood flow and blood pressure. Another study showed they prevent fat-like substances in the bloodstream from oxidizing and clogging the arteries, and make blood platelets less likely to stick together and cause clots.

Dark chocolate is also a source of minerals such as calcium, potassium, copper, and magnesium, which are



the body's
lar heartbeat

And if you ever wondered why chocolate seems to make people happy, it just might be due to the effect it has on the production of the natural feel good neurotransmitters, serotonin and endorphins.

It is also important to remember that not all chocolate is created equal. Primarily the manufacturing process determines the therapeutic effects of dark chocolate. The cacao bean, from which dark chocolate is derived, has a naturally bitter taste. The more it is diluted by sugars, milk and other ingredients, the less effective it is. Therefore, the darker the chocolate the more beneficial it will be.

There is something quite amazing about the Japanese people. Even though they live in one of the most stressed-out societies in the modern world, they are still considered extremely

essential
for many physiological
processes including
ability to maintain a regu-
and healthy blood pressure.

healthy people. In spite of the unrelenting demands and pressures of their culture, the World Health Organization has found that Japanese people live longer than practically any other culture on the planet. What's more surprising is they have extremely low rates of obesity, heart disease, and breast cancer. What is the secret that allows them to not only survive their high-pressured lifestyle but also actually thrive?

Suntheanine L-theanine

Green tea is the national drink of Japan and it has been for hundreds of years. It is such an intrinsic part of Japanese life that the tea ceremony, an elaborate ritual for the preparation and serving of green tea, has become an important cultural expression. This ancient ceremony embodies the essence of the healing benefits bestowed by green tea—the calming of the body, the stilling of the mind and the soothing of the soul.

What makes green tea so special? Japanese scientists discovered the answer to that question. The special ingredient was an amino acid called L-theanine. Researchers at Taiyo, a leading manufacturer of functional foods, discovered that L-theanine in its pure form, Suntheanine, had the unique ability to promote an alert state of relaxation without drowsiness.

Suntheanine's relaxation effect is caused by its ability to cross the blood-brain barrier, stimulating the formation of the neurotransmitter, GABA (gamma-aminobutyric acid). This neurotransmitter promotes a state of deep relaxation and calm, and at the same time increases sensations of pleasure. GABA is our body's own natural calming agent. By maintaining adequate levels of GABA, we are able to experience a sense of well-being and inner peace, no matter what our stress levels may be.

Suntheanine also alters brain wave patterns initiating alpha brain waves. A person experiencing an alpha wave feels relaxed without drowsiness or impaired motor skills, a focused and alert mind, easy access to expression, and an enhanced ability to learn, remember, and concentrate.

Since it is now recognized that stress is a huge impediment to optimal performance and good health, Suntheanine offers a profound antidote to the stress

assault encountered by most Americans. Ongoing research has provided conclusive results of the many ways Suntheanine protects and promotes well-being.

Suntheanine has many and varied proven health benefits. While not a sedative, it is able to significantly improve the quality of sleep, so you wake-up feeling truly rested and refreshed. Suntheanine also helps cells to better recognize foreign antigens and triggers the release of virus-destroying compounds in the cells. Most recently, research presented at the American Federation of Societies for Experimental Biology found Suntheanine to have unique cardiovascular benefits, lowering serum amyloid alpha (a marker for cardiovascular risk), LDL cholesterol, peroxidized lipids and blood pressure.

One Suntheanine study should be especially good news for women. Taking 200 mg of Suntheanine daily has been demonstrated to dramatically reduce the physical and emotional symptoms of PMS. Furthermore, it can uplift and enhance moods, making it a safe antidote to depression.

Suntheanine has numerous safety and efficacy studies behind it, as well as the FDA confirmation on its safety. The recommended amount of Suntheanine is 50–200 mg. It is also safe for children. Usually the calming effects are felt within 30 minutes and lasts from 8 to 12 hours.

The Best Chocolates for the Mind, Body, and Spirit

The two functional food products that are revolutionizing the world of gourmet dark chocolate experiences are truffles created by Perfect Chocolate, Inc.'s "The Doctor's Chocolate" and Intelligent Nutrient's InnerCalm Chocolate. Although these two products share two very important health-improving ingredients, pure dark chocolate and Suntheanine, they each dazzle your chocolate palate with their own unique formulas.

The Doctor's Chocolate is a luscious raspberry/chocolate truffle that is made with the superior quality dark chocolate that does not require the use of an alkali that enhances the color but strips out the important flavonoids.

Xylitol is then added to sweeten the chocolate. This unique sweetener actually protects the teeth from cavities, has 40 percent lower calories than sugar,

and is metabolized without requiring any insulin, which makes it the perfect sweetener for diabetics or anyone concerned about their weight.

According to integrative medical doctor Keith Scott-Mumby (the doctor behind The Doctor's Chocolate), "Stress can destroy our most precious relationships long before contributing to serious, life threatening, health concerns. I developed The Doctor's Chocolate with clinically proven Suntheanine to help lower the daily stress and tension while increasing focus and concentration."

And here is the best news of all; each truffle contains 125 mg of Suntheanine and only 20 calories. One or two truffles a day are all it takes to smooth away your stress jitters.

When it comes to a fabulous functional food experience, Intelligent Nutrients created a 74 percent organic, biodynamic and fair-trade dark chocolate bar infused with Suntheanine as well as delicious essential oils.

InnerCalm is flavored with organic lavender, mandarin, organic chamomile, orange, and Australian sustainable sandalwood essential oils. These organic essential oils provide flavor-aromatherapeutic benefits. To add to its antioxidant power, organic blueberries are another healthy ingredient.

Each two ounce bar contains 150 mg of Suntheanine. It is recommended that you divide the bar into three pieces to savor throughout the day. As you slowly let each piece melt in your mouth, you will also be melting away your cares and tensions.

The latest trend in functional foods, which combines the pleasures of dark chocolate with the many healing benefits of Suntheanine, is a delightful way to eat your chocolate while feeling calm, focused, and stress-free. Now chocoholics can indulge totally guilt-free.

Dark chocolate infused with Suntheanine may not make the world go around but it certainly makes the ride a whole lot more delectable and enjoyable. ■

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Suntheanine® creates an alert, yet totally relaxed state of mind without drowsiness.* Suntheanine is clinically proven to reduce stress, improve the quality of sleep, diminish normal symptoms of PMS, heighten mental acuity and reduce negative side effects of caffeine.* Suntheanine, discover it for yourself today. **For more information, contact us at sales@taiyoint.com or (763) 398-3003.**

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