

PULLOUT

Beat cabin
fever!

Great games and

SPECIAL

Great games and activities

Throw a Green Baby Shower

29 Easy, Fun Ideas

HEALTHY SLOW COOKER RECIPES

Nutrition Labels Decoded

VOTED! BEST BABY GEAR

Eco-friendly kids' rooms

Why Midwives Matter



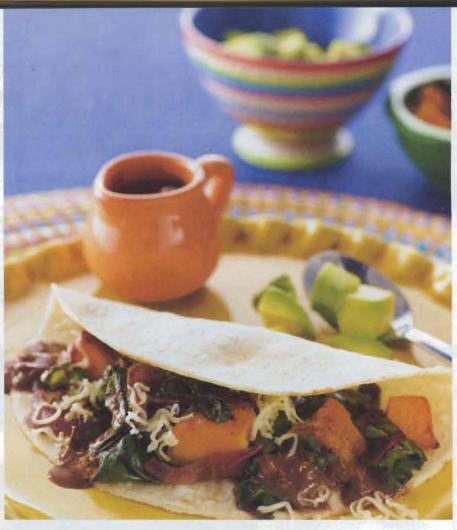
eat more chocolate

You heard that right! Here's how to reap all of its nutritional benefits-before you even get to dessert.

by Marygrace Taylor

By now, you've heard the news: Chocolate (especially the dark variety) is bursting with good-for-you antioxidants, the tiny nutritional powerhouses that are thought to combat inflammation and protect against everything from heart disease to cancer. What you might not know yet? Chocolate's rich in plenty of important vitamins and minerals, too, including iron, calcium, potassium, magnesium, and vitamins C, D, and E. "An ounce of dark chocolate contains 19 percent of your daily iron needs, and cocoa is one of the best sources of magnesium, which is essential for calcium absorption," says Sharon Richter, R.D., a certified dietetic nutritionist in New York City. Sounds great, right?

Of course, there's a catch: Most of the chocolate we love to eat-bars, truffles, cookies, cake, frosting, chocolate-covered peanuts, the list goes on and on-is also full of stuff that's not so healthy. "Unless it's cocoa powder that is completely unsweetened, chocolate will always have a lot of added fat (from milk and butter) and sugar," Richter says. But since choking down the bitter powder on its own seems



more torturous than tasty, you can try adding cocoa powder to your everyday food. You'll not only get the health benefits without the junk, but pairing cocoa with other good-for-you foods will actually enhance your absorption of all those vitamins and minerals that chocolate contains, too. Believe it or not, chocolate can pair well with vitamin C-rich foods like tomatoes, peppers, and raspberries, and those fruits and veggies will help your body make the most out of cocoa's high iron content. The vitamin D in milk and the magnesium in almonds aid your bones' efforts to take in more of cocoa's calcium.

Picking the right cocoa can even help

people and the planet. If you buy chocolate that's Fair Trade Certified, you can be sure that the cocoa beans are ethically sourced: Farmers work in safe conditions for a fair wage, and sellers receive a fair price for their goods. Certified products are guaranteed to meet high quality standards, and are grown or crafted sustainably, according to the Fair Trade Federation, a trade association promoting fair trade in North America.

The two recipes on these pages will take you beyond brownies to a whole new level of cooking with nutrient-rich cocoa. Tell your kids: We're having chocolate for breakfast-and dinner!

Fair Trade Cocoa

Bake with chocolate that's Fair Trade Certified by TransFair USA:

- Equal Exchange Organic Baking Cocoa (\$7.75 for 8 ounces, equalexchange.coop)
- Dagoba Organic Chocolate Baking Cacao Powder (\$10 for 8 ounces, dagobachocolate.com)
- Divine Cocoa (\$5 for 4.4 ounces, buydivine.com)