

# HEALTHY HEARTS

*This is a publication of Kean University's Physical Education, Recreation, and Health Department*



NEW YEARS RESOLUTION

## QUIT SMOKING!

**I**f you do not have a New Year's Resolution yet and you are a smoker, you should truly consider making this the year to quit. After knowing all of the negative side effects of smoking cigarettes, more and more people are quitting the nasty habit. In fact, there are more former smokers- nearly 50 million- than current smokers in the U.S.



Knowing the facts can make you more determined to quit smoking. There are more than 7,000 chemicals found in tobacco smoke; hundreds are

toxic and about 70 are known to cause cancer. Smoking causes immediate damage to the body. Tobacco use causes about 443,000 deaths each year. It kills more people every year than human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), illegal drugs, alcohol abuse, car crashes, suicides, and murders combined.

For every person who dies from a tobacco-related disease, another 20 people live with a serious smoking-related illness. If that does not make you want to quit, then I do not know what will.

(www.cdc.gov)

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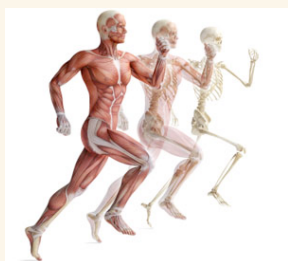
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### TRUE OR FALSE?

1. There are more former smokers than current smokers in the U.S.
2. Smoking does not cause immediate damage to the body.
3. Flavanols are the main type of flavonoid found in cocoa and chocolate.
4. The brain takes about 20 minutes to register fullness.

(Answers on Page 3)



# Heart Health Benefits of Chocolate

**T**he health benefits of chocolate have gained a lot of controversy in recent years. Now chocolate is believed to help protect your cardiovascular system, because cocoa beans are rich in flavonoids. Flavonoids can be found in a variety of foods, including fruits and vegetables. When we consume foods with flavonoids, we benefit from the antioxidant power.



Flavanols are the main type of flavonoid found in cocoa and chocolate. In addition to possessing antioxidant qualities, flavanols have been proven to positively influence vascular health such as lowering blood pressure and improving blood flow to the brain and heart. These plant chemicals are not only found in chocolate; flavanols can also be found in cranberries,



December 16th is National Chocolate Covered Anything Day; who said it can't be healthy for you?

apples, peanuts, onions, tea and red wine. Unfortunately, not all kinds of chocolate contain high levels of flavanols. Dark chocolate is generally better than milk chocolate, and cocoa powder that has not undergone

Dutch processing is your best bet. Also, watch out for chocolates that contain a multitude of extra ingredients that add extra fat and calories. Enjoy your chocolate in moderation. ([www.my.clevelandclinic.org](http://www.my.clevelandclinic.org))



## Toast to Health this Holiday Season

It may seem nearly impossible to eat healthy during the holiday season, but it can be done. Here are some tips to help you stay in shape during the holiday season. Never show up to a party on an empty stomach. If you eat fruit or some wheat crackers, you will curb your appetite and prevent over-eating. This is something that many people do not follow, but eat slowly! Your brain takes about 20 minutes to register fullness. It is best to enjoy your food by savoring each bite you take. Go easy on your fat intake; limit your consumption of cream based food, deep fried food, or foods with visible fat. Also, focus on your portion control. You can do this by using smaller serving dishes to make the food look more abundant on your plate.

## HAVE A SAFE AND HAPPY HOLIDAY SEASON!

Try to limit your alcohol and sweetened beverage intake.

Most people do not realize that consuming excessive amounts of alcohol or sweetened beverages may lead to weight gain. Therefore, you may want to limit your intake of such beverages. Here are some tips to help you do that:

- Request for plain water, sparkling mineral water, unsweetened ice tea or sugar-free soft drinks.
- For house parties, you can chose to bring along reduced sugar/ sugar-free beverages and share it among your friends.
- Offer to be the designated driver so you will be obliged to limit/ avoid alcoholic beverages for the safety of others.
- Give a firm reason for avoiding alcohol (ex: early morning appointment).
- Drink slowly. Make a glass of wine last longer to avoid refills.

([www.hpb.gov](http://www.hpb.gov))



## Answers:

### True or False?

1. True
2. False
3. True
4. True



### References:

<http://www.cdc.gov/features/smokingcessation/>

<http://my.clevelandclinic.org/services/heart/prevention/nutrition/food-choices/benefits-of-chocolate>

<http://www.hpb.gov.sg/HOPPortal/health-article/6770>

