



Weekly Wellness from The Integrative Docs

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EO Notes: Cacao

As an essential oil, Cacao, *Theobroma cacao*, is derived from the Cacao bean, which is a global crop. The oil is very thick (like a paste) and MUST be processed by extraction to make an absolute. The difference in processing becomes readily apparent as extraction can be done with solvents like Carbon Dioxide, Benzene, and Hexane. If it is processed without Hexane, it can be used topically and as an additive in foods.

Cacao is noted for its strong antioxidant and antibacterial properties which are excellent for skin care. It is commonly added to lip balms, scrubs, body wraps, and facial masks. Aromatically, cacao is commonly used as an aphrodisiac. From a therapeutic perspective, it is known to stimulate an emotional sense of wellbeing, promote clarity, relax muscles, and decrease anxiety. Not surprisingly, it is also used in foods and desserts to add the rich, decadent flavor that gourmet chocolate is known for. https://www.lgbotanicals.com/Cacao-Absolute-Hexane-Free-_p_253.html



Dark Chocolate

It is not a coincidence that cacao (chocolate) is historically the number one gift to share, as it is a natural source of Serotonin, and the amino acids L-Tryptophan (natural booster for serotonin) and Tyramine (natural booster for Dopamine) in the body. Dr. Ruth says that in moderation, Cacao is good for us. (<http://web.colby.edu/st297-global18/2018/10/28/serotonin-dopamine-th>)

7 Proven Health Benefits

Nutritious, Powerful Source of Antioxidants, Improves Blood Flow & Lowers Blood Pressure, Raises HDL and Protects LDL From Oxidation, May Reduce Heart Disease Risk, May Protect Your Skin From the Sun, Could Improve Brain Function.

<https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/7-health-benefits-dark-chocolate>

Valentines Day

This week celebrates Valentine's Day (the day of Love) and Random Acts of Kindness Day. Seemingly unrelated at first, these days focus on our feelings; both as a givers and also as recipients of affection. For single people, this can increase a sense of loneliness.

Our feelings are caused by neurotransmitters, and the three major ones that are associated with these holidays are Oxytocin (the Love hormone), Dopamine (the Reward Hormone), and Serotonin (the Happy Hormone). As humans, we need to feel loved.

If you are feeling down or need a quick "pick me up," research shows that a 20 second or longer hug from others, or a 30 second self-hug with a long deep breath, can boost oxytocin levels. We can also boost our serotonin levels naturally through exercise, bright light, massage, and meditation.

The Miracle of Massage

Massage is one of the oldest complementary therapies known to man and it has evolved to a science based on anatomy, physiology, and various kinds of "touch" to the human body. According to Scarlet Ramsdell, LMT at Hi-Lights Salon, in Ellsworth, there are several types of massage available to help people relax, recover from injury, or work through chronic pain. Skilled therapists listen to their patients and can adjust treatments to include hot stones, deep pressure, light touch, or short / long strokes.

Dr. Ruth reminds us that massage is not just body work, it is also an energetic connection with another person. It can be a therapeutic treatment to help with loneliness, depression, and even create mindful rest.

<https://www.healthline.com/health/types-of-massage#finding-a-massage-therapist>

"Look, there's no metaphysics on Earth like Chocolates." Fernando Pessoa

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Dr. Moore is an integrative practitioner who specializes in behavioral and holistic health. She is a board certified clinical aromatherapist with the Alliance of International Aromatherapists, a Fellow with the Complementary Medical Association, and the Chief Medical Officer for 5Strands Affordable Testing.



We have Some Exciting News!!!!

Downeast Wellness and Dr. Moore are pleased to announce the addition of their new Intern and Massage Therapy student, Samantha Moore. Samantha is a senior at the University of Maine at Machias, and is enrolled at the Downeast School of Massage. In the coming months, she will be available to provide massages under supervision. If you would like to help her develop these skills, call our office today to reserve an hour long, \$25 session on Fridays.

