

The Truth About Candy

Few products as candy bring so much joy yet are clouded in so much mystery and myth.

While candy is often a “special treat”, it can be enjoyed on a daily basis providing it is part of a well-balanced nutritious diet.

Below is an informative list compiled by the National Confectioners Association and Chocolate Manufacturers Association (NCA/CMA) that will hopefully shed light on many candy related questions.

MYTH: CANDY CONTRIBUTES TO A LARGE PERCENTAGE OF THE FAT & SUGAR IN THE AMERICAN DIET

TRUTH: In fact, less than two percent of the fat and ten percent of the sugar in our diets are supplied by candy. Most of the fat actually comes from the high-fat animal products we eat. The main sources of sugar in America's diets are sugary beverages, baked goods and frozen desserts

MYTH: FOODS HIGH IN SATURATED FATS RAISE CHOLESTROL LEVELS

TRUTH: Contrary to popular belief, not all types of saturated fats raise blood cholesterol levels. Stearic acid, the primary saturated fatty acid found in chocolate, has been shown to have a neutral effect on blood cholesterol levels

MYTH: AN OUNCE OF MILK CHOCOLATE CONTAINS ABOUT AS MUCH CAFFEINE AS A CUP OF COFFEE

TRUTH: Actually, a one-ounce piece of milk chocolate contains about the same amount of caffeine as a cup of decaffeinated coffee. There is an average of 6 mg. of caffeine in both an ounce of milk chocolate and a cup of decaf, while a cup of regular coffee contains between 150 and 655 mg. of caffeine

MYTH: THE SUGAR IN CANDY CAUSES HYPERACTIVITY IN CHILDREN

TRUTH: This is surely one of the most widely accepted candy misconceptions. Sugar DOES NOT cause hyperactivity in children, despite widespread belief to the contrary. Recent studies conducted at Vanderbilt University and the University Of Iowa College Of Medicine found no evidence that sugar has an adverse effect on children's behavior. As with anything, candy and sugar should be enjoyed in moderation.

MYTH: CANDIES SUCH AS JELLY BEANS, GUM DROPS AND HARD CANDIES ARE HIGH IN CALORIES

TRUTH: On the contrary. One butterscotch disc has only 20 calories. Eight gum drops or eight jellybeans (the equivalent of one ounce) contain 115 calories. Most of these candies favorites are fat- and cholesterol-free, making them a healthier treat than many people realize

MYTH: CHOCOLATE IS ADDICTIVE

TRUTH: Although it's true that many people love the taste of chocolate and it is surely fun to eat, chocolate is no more addictive than any other food. An addiction is a serious medical condition with specific physical and psychological symptoms. However, the desire for sweet tasting food is a strong biological drive, and it can be satisfied by eating any naturally sweet food or product made with sugar

MYTH: CANDY IS RESPONSIBLE FOR MOST TOOTH DECAY

TRUTH: Perhaps the most widely held misconception about candy. Any food containing fermentable carbohydrates, such as starches or sugars, can contribute to tooth decay. It all depends on how often we eat and drink these foods and how long they remain in our mouths. Good dental hygiene and regular fluoride treatments are the best ways to prevent cavities.