

Scientists discover way to make milk chocolate have dark chocolate health benefits

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Chocolate. Credit: Wikimedia Commons

Dark chocolate can be a source of antioxidants in the diet, but many consumers dislike the bitter flavor. The taste of milk chocolate is more appealing to a greater number of consumers, but it doesn't have the same antioxidants properties as dark chocolate. In a recent *Journal of Food Science* study, researchers found a way to use peanut skin extracts to make milk chocolate that has even more nutritional benefits of dark chocolate without affecting the taste.

Researchers from the Department of Food, Bioprocessing, and Nutrition Sciences at North Carolina State University extracted phenolic compounds from peanut skins, a waste product of [peanut production](#), and encapsulated them into maltodextrin powder which is an edible carbohydrate with a slightly sweet flavor that comes from starchy foods such as potatoes, rice or wheat. The maltodextrin powder was incorporated into the [milk chocolate](#).

Consumer testing of 80 subjects who compared samples of both milk chocolates with peanut extracts and without showed that the fortified

chocolates were liked as well as the untreated milk chocolate. These tests also showed that the threshold for detecting the presence of the peanut skin extract was higher than that needed to fortify the milk chocolate to antioxidant levels comparable to [dark chocolate](#).

Because peanut skins are a [waste product](#) of the blanching process of the peanut industry, the authors say that including these extracts would allow for a value-added use of the discarded skins.

"If applied to commercial products, peanut skin extracts would allow consumers to enjoy mild tasting products and have exposure to compounds that have proven health benefits," lead author Lisa L. Dean explained.

The researchers noted that peanut allergenicity was not investigated, but that work is now ongoing.

More information: L.L. Dean et al. Minimizing the Negative Flavor Attributes and Evaluating Consumer Acceptance of Chocolate Fortified with Peanut Skin Extracts, *Journal of Food Science* (2016). [DOI: 10.1111/1750-3841.13533](https://doi.org/10.1111/1750-3841.13533)

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