**The Monthly Installment**

October 2015, Volume 11(2)

---

**Some Health Benefits of Chocolate**

- An Italian study in the Journal of Sexual Medicine reports that eating chocolate leads to higher levels of desire, arousal, and sexual satisfaction. Female participants who consumed at least 1 cube of chocolate a day experienced more active libidos & better overall sexual function than those who didn't.

- Chocolate contains a compound called phenylethylamine (PEA), which releases the same mood-altering endorphins that flood our bodies during sex and intensify feelings of attraction between two people, says Lori Buckley, Psy.D, a certified sex therapist.

- In a 9-year Swedish study of more than 31,000 women, those who ate one or two servings of dark chocolate each week cut their risk for heart failure by as much as a third.

- Another long-term study in Germany in 2014 found that about a square of dark chocolate a day lowered blood pressure and reduced risk of heart attack and stroke by 39 percent. Most of the credit goes to flavonoids, antioxidant compounds that increase the flexibility of veins and arteries.

- UC San Diego researchers recently confirmed that when times get tough, people tend to dip into the chocolate stash more often than they might otherwise, but, as it turns out, that kind of emotional eating might not be such a bad thing. Stress and cortisol can wreak havoc on your body. Swiss scientists found that when very anxious people ate an ounce and a half of dark chocolate every day for two weeks, their stress hormone levels were significantly reduced and the metabolic effects of stress were partially mitigated. After a breakup, break out a dark chocolate bar rather than a pint of ice cream.

---

**Sex & Chocolate**

**Sexual Health Fair**

**Monday, October 19th**

4:00—6:00 PM

Hirst Lounge

---

**Healthy Monday**

Try this Healthy Monday mindfulness tip for a way to gain some much needed peace of mind in just 5 minutes!

**Give Your Mind a Break.**

Sitting or lying in a quiet place, turn your attention to the in and out of your breathing. Imagine a place, word, or song that you find soothing and restful. Feel your body and mind relaxing. If your mind wanders, gently bring it back to your breathing.

---

**There's No Such Thing as "Safe Sex"**

Sexual activity of any type: oral, vaginal, anal, or genital-to-genital contact without penetration can put you at risk for contracting an STD (or STI, the terms are used interchangeably). This is true, even if you or a partner wear a condom.

The only 100% way to protect yourself from contracting an STD is to practice complete abstinence from all types of sexual activity. However, that may not be an option for you or your partner.

Safer sex is anything done during sex play to reduce the risk of getting an infection. Even though a lot of people say "safe sex" instead of "safer sex," there is no kind of skin-to-skin sexual contact with a partner that is totally risk-free. However, being "safer" is something all of us can do. Here are some tips:

1. Use a condom or dental dam for any kind of sex, always.
2. Educate yourself about how STDs are transmitted and understand that any sexual contact is a risk for spreading an infection.
3. Talk with your partner! Open and honest communication is the best way to be sure both of your needs are met.
4. Limit your number of partners. Remember that when you have sex with someone, you are "having sex" with every person that they had sex with, and every person that they had sex with, and so on.
5. Get tested. Many STDs have little or no symptoms so you cannot base your status on how you or your partner look or feel. Testing is the only way to know for sure.
6. Birth control is only part of the solution. Birth control protects against a potential pregnancy, not STDs. A condom is still necessary to be fully protected.
7. Do not mix sex with alcohol. Alcohol lowers one's inhibitions and can be incapacitating in large quantities. Safer sex is sober, consensual sex.