



EXTRA DARK

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**NEW RESEARCH STUDY LINKS DARK CHOCOLATE TO
VASCULAR HEALTH BENEFITS**

***Yale-Griffin Findings Highlight Hershey®s Extra Dark Chocolate AND Becomes the First
Chocolate Bar to Earn Respected Best Life Seal of Approval***

HERSHEY, Pa. – July 30, 2008 – Dark chocolate has come to be recognized for its flavanol antioxidant benefits, but a new study, conducted by the Yale-Griffin Prevention Research Center, has uncovered an important link to its vascular health benefits. The study, which used *Hershey's Extra Dark* Chocolate, reported that dark chocolate has a positive impact on blood pressure and blood vessel function. The study's release comes on the heels of *Hershey's Extra Dark* Chocolate, a rich dark chocolate featuring 60 percent cacao, earning renowned health and fitness expert Bob Greene's Best Life seal of approval – the first chocolate bar to earn that distinction.

“The Hershey Company is continuously looking for opportunities to offer products that support the balanced lifestyles of today's health-conscious consumers,” said Debra Miller, Ph.D., Director of Nutrition, The Hershey Company. “This one-two punch of the Yale-Griffin research confirming chocolate's vascular health benefits, combined with Bob Greene's Best Life seal, makes *Hershey's Extra Dark* Chocolate a sensible option for people looking for small indulgences.”

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The Yale-Griffin Prevention Research Center study is the largest study of its kind to research the short-term benefits of solid dark chocolate and cocoa containing beverages on blood pressure and endothelial function (blood vessel function). The results of the study, recently published in the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*, found that consuming *Hershey's Extra Dark Chocolate* (75g) as well as *Hershey's Natural Cocoa* (22g) lowered blood pressure and improved endothelial function in 45 participants 2 hours after consumption.

“Our study demonstrated impressive enhancement of endothelial function following the acute consumption of dark chocolate and cocoa,” said David L. Katz, MD, MPH, principal investigator of the study and director of the Prevention Research Center. “The results are exciting because they show that dark chocolate, a highly-popular treat long associated with pleasure, has health promoting properties as well.”

In addition, The Hershey Company announced that *Hershey's Extra Dark Chocolate* is the first chocolate bar to earn the respected Best Life seal of approval. Designed by Bob Greene, respected exercise physiologist and famed trainer, the Best Life seal appears on select grocery products and is intended to help consumers make healthier food and lifestyle decisions. *Hershey's Extra Dark Chocolate's* naturally occurring antioxidants and proven vascular health benefits helped the product to earn this distinction. Bob Greene will utilize *Hershey's Extra Dark Chocolate* and *Hershey's Natural Cocoa* as he helps consumers to develop balanced, healthy lifestyles through his book, *The Best Life Diet*, the companion website TheBestLife.com, appearances on *The Oprah Winfrey Show* and other national television and radio shows, and national tours.

Hershey's Extra Dark Chocolate is available wherever candy is sold. The Best Life seal of approval will begin appearing on packaging later this year.

About The Hershey Company

The Hershey Company (NYSE: HSY) is the largest North American manufacturer of quality chocolate and sugar confectionery products. With revenues of nearly \$5 billion and approximately 13,000 employees worldwide, The Hershey Company markets such iconic brands

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as *Hershey's*, *Reese's*, *Hershey's Kisses*, *Kit Kat*, *Twizzlers* and *Ice Breakers*. Hershey is the leader in the fast-growing dark and premium chocolate segment, with such brands as *Hershey's Bliss*, *Hershey's Special Dark*, *Hershey's Extra Dark* and *Cacao Reserve by Hershey's*. Hershey's *Ice Breakers* franchise delivers refreshment across a variety of mint and gum flavors and formats. Hershey's partnership with Starbucks offers a premium chocolate experience that combines the highest-quality chocolate with Starbucks coffee-house flavors, for a range of delicious and distinct chocolate products. In addition, Artisan Confections Company, a wholly owned subsidiary of The Hershey Company, markets such premium chocolate offerings as *Scharffen Berger*, known for its high-cacao dark chocolate products, *Joseph Schmidt*, recognized for its fine, handcrafted chocolate gifts, and *Dagoba*, known for its high-quality natural and organic chocolate bars. Visit us at www.hersheynewsroom.com.

About The Best Life

The Best Life Diet is not a typical diet plan. Instead, it's a way of living—of eating, exercising and viewing life—that promotes weight loss and fosters lifelong weight control. The three-phased plan offers a gradual approach to developing healthy habits that not only increase fitness and reduce body weight, but can also dramatically reduce the risk for diabetes, heart disease and other chronic conditions. For more on the program, visit www.TheBestLife.com.

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