If you were told you could brush your teeth with chocolate, would you do it? What if you were told that it was a natural alternative to fluoride? Well, we are not quite to that point yet, but we're getting close: a new toothpaste purports to strengthen tooth enamel naturally by using — what else? — an extract from cocoa.

Theodent™ toothpaste claims to increase *the size of the surface unit crystals of your enamel by four times. Larger unit crystals make your teeth less susceptible to bacterial acid demineralization and keep your teeth healthy and robust.*

Research on the extract has been ongoing since the 1980s, when clinical studies discovered a cocoa extract was beneficial in fighting cavities. It became more publicized when Arman Sadeghpour used the research as part of his doctoral thesis at Tulane University. Sadeghpour compared the effects of cocoa extract and fluoride on tooth enamel, discovering that cocoa extract can strengthen and enlarge the crystals that make up the tooth, resulting in stronger enamel.

Now Theodent™ toothpaste, utilizing a proprietary blend of the cocoa extract, is coming to the market. It will first be available on their website ([http://www.theodent.com/](http://www.theodent.com/)) and at select Whole Foods locations. The toothpaste doesn't actually taste like chocolate; it is mint-flavored. But developers hope to expand the Theodent line to include dental floss, mouthwash and, yes, a chocolate-flavored, sugar-free toothpaste for children.

What's our take? I'm always willing to try new natural toothpastes. To be honest, it's very difficult to make an effective natural toothpaste that is right for everyone (just look at some of the research we've done: What's the Best Toothpaste?). We will be getting a few bottles soon and I will do some biocompatibility testing to see how this new "chocolate" toothpaste works with the majority of our patients. Stay tuned for a follow-up article on Theodent™ in the not-too-distant future.