

## Go Nuts: Keeping Heart-Healthy

*Growing evidence suggests eating nuts 2 times a week may keep the heart healthy and reduce risk of sudden death.*

Men who eat nuts two or more times per week may dramatically reduce their risk of sudden death from heart disease according to a recent study analyzing nut consumption of over 21,000 men.

A growing body of evidence has consistently shown that moderate, regular nut consumption is associated with a reduced risk of heart disease and cardiac death. The researchers in this study evaluated nut consumption from diet questionnaires that were completed over 17 years by 21,454 male subjects in the Physician's Health Study. The researchers documented the number of subjects who developed heart disease or died from heart disease-related reasons and compared it with their dietary habits.

Compared to men who rarely or never consumed nuts, subjects who ate a handful of nuts two or more times per week had nearly 50% less risk of sudden cardiac death and 30% less risk of overall heart disease death.

While higher in total fat than some foods, nuts provide *heart-healthy fats* that have been shown in other studies to lower LDL "bad" cholesterol, decrease heart arrhythmias and inflammation, and lessen other heart disease risk factors. Besides heart-healthy unsaturated and monounsaturated fats, nuts are also good sources of Vitamin E, magnesium, and protein.

While this observational study cannot directly conclude that consuming nuts decreases a person's risk of developing or dying from heart disease, the association demonstrates a potential. Therefore, including nuts in the diet in moderation can be a safe and nutritious addition to a heart-healthy diet – one that may potentially reduce the risk of heart disease.

### *References:*

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