

The Power of Peanut Butter

Researchers show regular intake of peanut butter and other nuts can lower the risk of type 2 diabetes in women.

Women who regularly eat nuts or peanut butter at least five times weekly have approximately 25% lower risk of developing diabetes than those who never or almost never eat nuts. This was a significant finding by researchers who followed 83,818 women in the Nurses' Health Study.

The women completed dietary questionnaires every few years between 1980-1996. Scientists analyzed their nut and peanut butter consumption patterns and the relationship with later development of diabetes.

The researchers showed that 5-tablespoons of peanut butter per week lowered the risk of diabetes by 21%. The relationship was also shown with 5 weekly servings of other nuts. One serving of nuts is equal to one-ounce or roughly 28 whole almonds.

Because nuts are high in fat and calories, people are sometimes reluctant to include them in their diet. However, when used to *replace* red meat or other processed meats that are high in saturated fats and refined grains high in *trans*-fats, peanut butter and nuts can offer substantial benefits in reducing the risk of diabetes.

This is one of the first major studies to show the benefit of nuts in reducing risk of diabetes, but growing evidence has already shown that nuts also reduce the risk of heart disease and other cardiovascular risk factors like high cholesterol.

The epidemic of diabetes currently affects 17-million Americans. Diabetes is one of our top killers and its complications hinder the health of many individuals. Including nuts to replace other less-healthy foods in the diet can be a safe and healthy way to potentially reduce risk of diabetes.

References:

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