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Daily nut consumption is linked with decreased incidence of a wide range of diseases

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Diet rich in beneficial phytochemicals have been linked decreased incidences of several chronic diseases including cardiac disease, some cancers and diabetes.8-12 Whilst most of these studies have concentrated on culinary herbs and high antioxidant fruits, recent laboratory based studies have also highlighted the therapeutic potential of edible nuts the prevention and treatment of some acute and chronic diseases.13-15

A recent meta-analysis study examined a wide range of epidemiological reports on the correlation of nut consumption and disease preven-
That study reported that consumption of as little as 20 g or nuts daily (approximately a handful) significantly inhibits the incidence of some chronic diseases. Indeed, the incidence of coronary disease was decreased by approximately 30% in individuals consuming nuts compared to the average incidence globally. Furthermore, the risk of cancer was 15% lower in people who regularly consumed nuts (the effects against individual types of cancer was not specified) and the overall risk of premature death from all causes was decreased by more than 20%. The correlation between nut consumption and premature death from respiratory disease (approximately 50%) and diabetes (nearly 40%) was even more noteworthy.

The report was an extensive study, analysing data from approximately 820,000 participants across 29 published studies from different geographical regions and cultures. The study included all types of tree nuts, and also included peanuts (which are actually legumes, but are often considered as nuts). Interestingly, the analysis reported that the results were similar regardless of the type of nut examined, or the total nut consumption. The authors concluded that as all nuts and peanuts are high in fibre, magnesium and polyunsaturated fats (which are beneficial for reducing blood cholesterol levels and decreasing cardiovascular disease) and some nuts are also high in antioxidants (which reduce cancer risk), that these components may be responsible for these beneficial effects. Whilst prevention of chronic disease correlated with daily consumption of nuts up to 20 g per day, there was no additional benefit from high consumption.

REFERENCES


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