



**For Immediate Release**

April 20, 1998

**Contact:**

**Pat Kearney**

**(703) 841-1600**

[pmk@pmkassociates.com](mailto:pmk@pmkassociates.com)

**Diets with Peanuts Plus Peanut Butter or Peanut Oil Lower Total Cholesterol and LDL-C...Eliminate Triglyceride Increase**

This is a study that will set peanut butter lovers rejoicing. Dr. Penny Kris-Etherton, Pennsylvania State University, and colleagues found that diets high in peanuts plus peanut butter or peanut oil are as effective as diets high in olive oil in protecting against heart disease. In fact, the diets high in peanut products offered more heart disease protective benefits than the very low fat diets.

The researchers compared the effects of five diets -- low fat, olive oil, peanuts plus peanut butter, peanut oil, and typical American with 35 percent fat -- on the blood lipids of 22 healthy men and women, ages 21-54, many of whom had slightly elevated blood cholesterol at the beginning of the study. The peanuts plus peanut butter, peanut oil, and olive oil diets all lowered total and LDL cholesterol and triglyceride levels while not lowering the beneficial HDL cholesterol levels. The low fat diet lowered LDL levels but also lowered HDL cholesterol and increased triglyceride levels.

The so-called peanut diets actually had relatively small amounts of peanut products, but they were eaten daily. For example, a little peanut butter was added to a bagel in the morning, and a small serving of peanuts made an afternoon snack. In the peanut oil diet, peanut oil replaced other oils used for salads and entrees. All subjects maintained their starting weight throughout the study, consisting of 25 days of each of the five diets. Dr. Kris-Etherton believes the findings offer people another food option for increasing monounsaturated fats in the diet and adding variety, flexibility, and eating satisfaction to diet planning. The research team also believes that the positive effects from peanut products may go beyond beneficial fatty acids. Antioxidant Vitamin E, folic acid, phytochemicals, fiber, minerals and plant protein contained in peanuts may all contribute to heart disease protection.

The Peanut Institute is a non-profit organization that supports nutrition research and develops educational programs to encourage healthful lifestyles. Learn more about peanuts and health at [www.peanut-institute.org](http://www.peanut-institute.org)

###