



For Immediate Release

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Eating Nuts Can Reduce the Risk of Another Coronary Event

Washington, D.C., April 19, 1999 -- According to new research from the Harvard School of Public Health, eating even just two servings of peanuts or other nuts per week can decrease the risk of having another coronary event among people who have survived a heart attack by 25%. This research from the Cholesterol and Recurrent Event (CARE) trial was presented at the annual Experimental Biology Conference in Washington, D.C.

Researchers at Harvard followed a group of men and women for four years and found that those who ate two or more servings of peanuts or nuts per week had a significantly lower risk of coronary heart disease (CHD) compared to those who rarely or never ate nuts. Lisa Brown, D.Sc., principle investigator of the study notes, "These findings suggest that peanuts and other nuts may be included as part of a heart-healthy diet."

These results are consistent with other large population studies. The Nurses' Health Study, conducted at Harvard School of Public Health, found that frequent consumption of peanuts or other nuts was associated with a lowered risk of CHD. Researchers studied the eating habits and health outcomes of over 86,000 women and found that those who ate more than five servings of peanuts or other nuts per week decreased their risk of heart disease by about one third, compared to women who rarely or never ate nuts. Furthermore, preliminary results of the Physicians Health Study, also conducted at Harvard, found that in over 22,000 male physicians, the risk of cardiac death decreased as nut consumption increased.

Earlier studies identified the heart healthfulness of peanuts and nuts as well. In the Iowa Women's Study, researchers found that in over 34,000 post-menopausal women with no cardiovascular disease, higher levels of nut consumption were related to lower risk of dying from heart disease. In 1992, Gary Fraser at Loma Linda University was one of the first scientists to suggest that nut-eaters are a healthy group. He studied the diets of 27,000 Seventh-Day Adventists and after examining the relationship between CHD and 65 different foods, nuts by far had the strongest protective effect on the risk of having a heart attack or dying of heart disease. Further diet analysis showed that 32 percent of the nuts consumed by study participants were peanuts.

In addition to heart-healthy monounsaturated fat, peanuts contain significant amounts of plant protein, fiber, magnesium, vitamin E, and phytochemicals, all of which may contribute to their healthfulness. Many hard-to-get nutrients such as copper, phosphorus, potassium and zinc are also found in peanuts and peanut butter.

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

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