



**For Immediate Release**

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**Contact:**

**Pat Kearney**

**(703) 841-1600**

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

**Antioxidants from Food Sources, Like Peanuts  
and Peanut Butter, May Protect Against Alzheimer Disease**

*Arlington, VA, June 26, 2002* -- Eating foods with vitamin E, like whole grains, peanuts, nuts, peanut butter, vegetable oils, and seeds, can help reduce the risk of Alzheimer's, according to two break-through studies just published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*. The same benefits did not hold true for vitamin E from supplements, making the case for getting antioxidants from a healthy diet, instead of a bottle of pills.

The first study comes from the Netherlands and looked at the diets of over 5,000 adults. The researchers saw an association between consumption of whole foods containing the antioxidants vitamin E and vitamin C and decreased risk of Alzheimer's. This was especially true for current smokers, who are at increased risk of developing the disease. The second study, from the United States, was smaller (815 participants) and found an association only between decreased risk of Alzheimer disease and diets higher in vitamin E. In this study, the group with the highest dietary intake of vitamin E had a 67% decreased risk of developing Alzheimer's compared to the group with the lowest intake of vitamin E. These findings add to the evidence for consuming antioxidant-rich foods to ward off chronic diseases, like cancer and heart disease, based on the theory that antioxidants protect against free radicals that can damage cells.

Vitamin E is a fat-soluble vitamin, which means that some fat is needed to maximize absorption of this important nutrient. Look for vitamin E in foods that contain healthy unsaturated fat, like peanuts and peanut butter--some of America's favorite foods.

Peanut butter was originally developed in the late 1800's as a health food packed with nutrients for elderly patients unable to chew solid foods and remains much the same today. Peanut butter is an excellent source of vitamin E providing 21% of the Recommended Dietary Allowance (RDA), or 3.2 milligrams of vitamin E per two-tablespoon serving. The studies also show that antioxidant-rich whole grains are beneficial. A peanut butter sandwich on whole-grain bread with some fruit and veggies plus non-fat milk is a great way to start the day--or it can be a quick lunch, dinner or snack. This wholesome combination will put you well on your way to meeting the RDA for vitamin E of 15 milligrams.

Peanuts are also a good source of vitamin E, providing 2.6 milligrams or 17% of the RDA per one-ounce serving (a small handful). Sprinkle peanuts on your salad or cereal for extra nutrients and crunch, or snack on a handful of peanuts instead of chips or pretzels.

Peanuts and peanut butter provide many more nutrients important to older adults, such as plant protein and fiber. In addition, peanuts and peanut butter are rich in heart-healthy

monounsaturated fat and contain folate, niacin, thiamin, magnesium, and zinc, all of which are thought to benefit health.

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 <http://www.peanut-institute.org>

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