

Nutrition In A Nutshell



Peanuts And Peanut Butter Can Reduce Diabetes Risk

(NAPS)—Enjoying a peanut butter sandwich at lunch or snacking on a handful of peanuts won't just fill you up. It'll also reduce your diabetes risk, according to a new Harvard School of Public Health study published in the *American Journal of Epidemiology*.

The study is the first to compare the long-term effects of eating animal protein versus plant protein on type 2 diabetes risk.

Over 200,000 participants, followed for 20 years, showed that those who ate diets high in plant protein reduced their type 2 diabetes risk by 9 percent. Alternatively, those who ate diets high in animal protein increased their risk by 13 percent.

According to the study, "whole grains, peanuts and peanut butter were the most commonly consumed major food sources of vegetable protein." In fact, peanuts and peanut butter are among the most popular plant proteins eaten in the United States today.

Peanuts contain about eight grams of protein, more than any other nut. They're also a good source of fiber and essential nutrients. Unlike animal protein, which can be high in cholesterol and saturated fat, peanut protein is cholesterol-free and high in healthy fats. This nutritious package supports heart health, weight management and diabetes prevention.

Researchers also looked at peanuts and peanut butter specifically and their effect on diabetes risk. When one serving of peanuts or peanut butter was swapped for one serving of deli meat, diabetes risk decreased by 21 percent. Swapping peanuts for refined grains or potatoes resulted in a 7 to 16 percent diabetes risk reduction.

This study provides new evidence that increasing plant protein, particularly peanuts and peanut butter, can greatly improve health, espe-



Peanuts and peanut butter are rich in healthful plant protein.

cially when substituted for meats and refined carbohydrates.

Since most households already keep peanut butter on hand, incorporating more plant-based eating into your diet can be very easy.

Peanut Butter & Strawberry Quesadillas

Makes 2 quesadillas

2 (8-inch) whole-wheat flour tortillas

4 tablespoons creamy peanut butter

1/8 teaspoon cinnamon

1 cup strawberries, hulled and sliced

Combine the peanut butter and cinnamon in a bowl. Spread half of the peanut butter over the tortilla. Arrange half of the strawberries over half of the tortilla. Fold the top half over the strawberries to form a half circle. Repeat for the second quesadilla. Cook quesadillas in skillet over medium-low heat, turning once, until lightly browned and heated through (6–8 minutes). Transfer to a cutting board, let cool, then cut each into thirds.

Learn More

For more recipes and health facts, visit www.peanutpower.org.