
Frequent Consumption Shows Positive Health Benefits

- Last Updated ()

The Adventist Health Study conducted at Loma Linda University has indicated that consumption of nuts at least once per week lowers the risk of heart disease by 25 percent (of the 31,200 people surveyed peanuts accounted for 32 percent of the nuts eaten). Consumption of nuts five or more times a week doubles the protection, the study concluded.

The Harvard Nurses Health Study followed the eating habits of over 86,000 nurses for 14 years. Women who frequently ate small amounts of nuts, including peanuts, lowered their risk of heart disease by about a third, compared to women who rarely ate nuts, said Dr. Frank Hu, principal investigator of the study. It is estimated that peanuts and peanut butter compromised more than half the nuts eaten by women in this study.

The Physicians Health Study conducted on over 22,000 male physicians by Harvard researchers, reported that, as nut consumption increased, the risk of cardiac death decreased. In addition, eating peanuts frequently seemed to protect those who did have heart attacks from dying.

Peanuts are a good source of Folate: an essential vitamin for healthy babies and healthy hearts. The March of Dimes Birth Defects Foundation recommends including folate in the diet in the earliest weeks of pregnancy for preventing neural tube birth defects. The U.S. Public Health Service recommends that all women of child bearing age consume 400 micrograms of folic acid/folate daily.

Scientists also find that consumption of at least 400 micrograms is important for all segments of the population to decrease risks of coronary heart disease (in the U.S. 88 percent of adults do not get the recommended 400 micrograms).

One ounce of peanuts contains 41 micrograms of folate or 10 percent of the DV.