



## food matters

with Consultant Nutritionist Sue Radd

### nuts to you, too!

Regularly eating nuts might just protect you from a heart attack and add years to your life. But do they also cause you put on weight?

More than four large international studies, including one of some 150,000 people, have linked frequent nut consumption with protection from heart attack. Over 10 clinical trials show that incorporating nuts into a daily diet lowers heightened cholesterol levels.

#### benefits

Eating nuts has also been identified as one of the key health practices increasing life expectancy. Orthodox Seventh-day Adventists who are interested in good health, who are vegetarian, exercise regularly, don't smoke, are not obese—and eat nuts around five times per week—can expect an extra 10 years of life compared to their more liberal Seventh-day Adventist peers who don't follow these healthful practices.

As a group, however, Seventh-day Adventists have better health statistics than the broad population.

#### a high-fat food

It's true: nuts do contribute to weight gain. Nuts are around 70 per cent fat, but it's a good fat. Despite their high fat content, people who regularly include nuts in their diet are generally thinner than

those who shun them, according to a review of key studies.

If you are on a diet to lose weight, including some nuts may actually help you stick to it better, since nuts make eating a lot more palatable. In one study of a kilojoule-controlled diet, nuts helped promote more sustained weight-loss than a low-fat diet of the same kilojoules without nuts.

Preliminary findings suggest that the fat present in nuts may not all be absorbed into the body. People who eat more nuts excrete more fat.

#### get cracking

Don't give up nuts just because you're trying to lose weight. Eat a handful every other day. Substitute nuts for chocolate bars, crisps, hot chips, ice-cream and all other snack foods.

See **page 25** for some delicious recipes.