



FOOD MATTERS

WITH CONSULTANT NUTRITIONIST SUE RADD



pills or peanuts?

Sometimes fact seems stranger than fiction. Certain high-fat foods, such as peanuts and peanut butter, not only protect us from developing heart disease, but high mono-unsaturated fat diets based on these foods have been found to work better than low-fat diets to reduce risk factors for this chronic condition!

Peanuts (as well as tree nuts) also give cholesterol-lowering drugs a run for their money, especially if you incorporate them into a diet with other heart-healthy ingredients such as soy, lentils, psyllium husks, oats, barley and plant sterols.

power in a peanut

In a nutshell, peanuts are nutrient-dense packages. Here are just a few reasons you should consider eating them regularly (unless, of course, you have a peanut allergy!).

- ▶ As part of their high-protein content, peanuts contain arginine, an amino acid that makes blood vessels relax.
- ▶ Despite being high in total fat, peanuts have a low level of saturated fat.
- ▶ Peanuts are rich in magnesium, which protects against the metabolic syndrome, a situation leading to heart disease.
- ▶ Frequent peanut intake protects against type 2 diabetes.
- ▶ Peanuts provide potassium, which is important for blood-pressure control.

▶ Peanut eaters are generally slimmer—they have lower BMIs. Foods rich in vitamin E, such as peanuts, guard against Alzheimer's disease.

three ways to eat more

1. Snack on whole, freshly shelled peanuts, preferably with their skin. The red skin is loaded with resveratrol, a strong antioxidant responsible for positioning red wine in the news as a heart protector.
2. Spread your bread with natural peanut butter instead of margarine or dairy butter. The natural version has no added salt, sugar or fats!
3. Toss peanuts into a stir-fry or add to fried rice.

Hi Oleic peanuts are now also available. These are naturally bred to contain up to 30 per cent more monounsaturated fatty acids, meaning that their fat profile is very similar to olive oil! Hi Oleic peanuts taste crunchier and fresher, having a shelf life is up to 15 times longer than that of ordinary peanuts.

See **page 37** for a peanut recipe that will also keep you young at heart!

FOR MORE INFORMATION

For further information on healthy eating please contact *Sanitarium Nutrition Service*

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