

Peanut Butter can be Hearty Choice for Nutrition

Peanut butter can offer the same health benefits that peanuts do. Peanuts are a legume and can give you the same health benefits as true tree nuts, such as almonds and walnuts.

Several studies have shown that people who regularly eat nuts, including peanuts or peanut butter are less likely to suffer from heart disease or type 2 diabetes compared with people who don't eat nuts or nut butters. Although the possibility exist that people who eat nuts are different from those who don't, is perhaps they exercise more or have other healthy habits. Healthy experts do believe that regular consumption of nuts can make a different.

Some studies indicate that dieters who eat peanuts or peanut butter are more successful at weight loss than those who avoid them. This could be due to their high fat and protein content, which makes them more filling compared to high carbohydrate foods.

As with any kind of nuts and nut butters, moderation is important. A serving of peanut butter is two tablespoons. The next time you make a sandwich, measure that amount before you spread it on your bread. If you typically use more, then try cutting back.

Two tablespoons of peanut butter or an ounce of nuts (about 28 peanuts) gives you the equivalent of 2 ounces of dietary protein. The guidelines recommend that most people eat about 5 to 6 ounces of protein a day. Knowing those numbers shows how easy it is to go overboard with nuts and nut butters.

Here are a few things to keep in mind about peanuts and peanut butter:

- An ounce of peanuts contains about 165 calories. Two tablespoons of peanut butter contains about 190 calories. Nuts have more unsaturated fat than saturated fat. Unsaturated fat is a healthier fat. Peanuts and peanut butter can also be high in sodium when salted, but its effects on blood pressure are somewhat moderated by the generous amount of potassium in peanuts.
- Before choosing reduced-fat peanut butter, compare the Nutrition Facts labels. It normally has as many calories as regular peanut butter and has more sugar.
- Peanut butter may contain very small amounts of unhealthy trans fats because of the use of partially hydrogenated oil to make the peanut butter smoother. However, many brands are now processed using fully hydrogenated oils, which don't contain trans fats.