

PASS THE PEANUTS - FOR A HEART HEALTHY APPROACH

One of the world's leading authorities on nutrition and heart disease is visiting Australia next week with a clear message....Forget low fat diets, just choose your fats wisely.

Dr Penny Kris-Etherton, Distinguished Professor of Nutrition at Penn State University, Pennsylvania latest research challenges the traditional approaches to western diets.

The Professor says her recent research which shows that diets, which include peanuts, peanut butter and peanut oil every day, are more heart healthy than low fat diets and are as heart healthy as diets using olive oil.

In her study, conducted with Dr Tom Pearson, the healthy subjects consumed five types of diets - low fat, olive oil, peanut/peanut butter, peanut oil and what was described as typical American.

The results show that the peanut/peanut butter, peanut oil and olive oil diets lowered total cholesterol and the "bad" LDL cholesterol and triglyceride levels but did not lower the beneficial HDL cholesterol.

Professor Kris-Etherton says the peanut diets included small amounts of peanut products daily - a little peanut butter on a bagel, peanuts as an afternoon snack and peanut oil in salad dressing.

"The data on peanuts is really amazing. Higher amounts of peanuts consumed can lower the risk of heart disease significantly. Many people can reduce their risk as much as 40% to 50%. The results have been very consistent."

Professor Kris-Etherton is visiting Australia hosted by PCA to speak at Nutrition Workshops in Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide targeted at health professionals and researchers. Penny will also be a key presenter at an international conference in Cairns.

Marketing Manager for PCA Juli Robertson says the Professor's visit is timely.

“Australian peanut growers are now growing healthy Hi Oleic peanuts which are even better than regular peanuts. They've got more healthy monounsaturated fats and less of the unhealthy saturated fats, just like olive oil.

“PCA is so impressed with these new varieties of Hi Oleic peanuts that we've secured the breeding rights and are working towards having 100 per cent Hi Oleic production by the end of this year.

“We're the sole producer of Hi Oleic peanuts in Australia and the only supplier in the world who can guarantee 100% purity so we've got some great export opportunities as well.

“Hi Oleic peanuts are just naturally better peanuts for everyone.”

Ms Robertson says during the “*fear of fat*” era peanuts were shunned by dieters. But research has shown that peanuts could actually help people stick to their diets. The Australian consumer is beginning to understand that not all fats are “BAD” and in fact they are an essential part of every diet.

“The research undertaken by Professor Kris-Etherton highlights that some fats are good for you, monounsaturates and polyunsaturates.” Hi Oleic peanuts are a good source of good oils (monounsturated), are also full of protein, vitamins, phytonutrients and fibre, making them a healthy snacking choice on the run, they are really natures fast food.

“In fact the research has also found that men women and children who eat a daily dose of peanuts or peanut butter are better able to meet the recommended daily allowance for vitamins and nutrients than those who don't.”

Professor Kris- Etherton says it is all about choosing fats wisely-avoid trans and saturated fats and people should aim to consume up to 35% of their calories in good fats, and that means eating peanuts.

Professor Kris-Etherton will also meet with major food manufacturers during her week in Australia.

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