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## Cut breast cancer risk with a handful of nuts

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EATING plenty of nuts more than halves the risk of advanced breast cancer, research shows.

A study of around 3,500 cancer patients who ate all major varieties found they reduced recurrence of the disease by 52 per cent – while mortality rates fell by nearly a third. Participants were told to consume more than the average intake of nuts per week, which is just over half an ounce – 20 peanuts, 14 almonds or 16 walnut halves.

Doctors recommend people eat about two and a half times this amount as part of a balanced diet.

Corresponding author Professor Xiao-Ou Shu, of Vanderbilt University in the US, said studies had already indicated the “growth-inhibitory effects of nut components on human breast cancer cells”. He added: “Nuts are important components of healthy diets. Promoting this lifestyle factor should be emphasised in breast cancer survivor guidelines.”

Nuts are rich in nutrients including unsaturated fatty acids, protein, fibre, vitamins, minerals and other healthy plant compounds.

They can lower cholesterol levels, inhibit oxidation and regulate cell dysfunction, multiple studies suggest.

Every year around 55,000 women in the UK are diagnosed with breast cancer and the disease claims 11,500 lives annually.

The findings were based on data taken from subjects in the Shanghai Breast Cancer Survival Study and were published in the International Journal of Cancer.