

- Weight loss

Good news for health nuts: peanuts can help you lose kilos

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Dieting can be a tough nut to crack, but it turns out peanuts could provide a solution for weight loss.

New research from University of South Australia has revealed the popular bar snack is also a way to help shed unwanted kilos and keep your cardio health in check.

The study, in partnership with Texas Tech University, has found eating 35g of lightly salted, dryroasted peanuts before two main meals each day can contribute to weight loss, lower blood pressure and improved fasting glucose levels.

Co-researcher assistant professor Kristina Petersen from Texas Tech University says the study breaks down some of the misconceptions about the health effects of peanuts.

“Our study found that peanuts, which are high in healthy unsaturated fats, can be part of an effective weight loss diet,” Petersen says.

“People often avoid peanuts when trying to lose weight because they believe they contain too many kilojoules. Yet, peanuts actually have a high satiety value, meaning that they can keep you feeling fuller for longer and this can be really helpful for those on a weight loss diet.

“Recognising that foods high in protein and fibre can deliver a feeling of fullness can help reduce the urge to snack or overeat.”

Peanuts are considered to be one of these foods. “It’s certainly good news for nut lovers,” she says. Assessing two groups of Australian adults at moderate or high risk for type 2 diabetes, researchers tested the effect of consuming 70g of peanuts (an extra 15g of fibre) on top of a weight loss diet, as compared to a traditional low-fat weight loss diet. They found that both groups lost weight after six months (6.7kg). Those who ate peanuts had greater improvements in their blood pressure, with this group recording lower blood pressure (by 5 mmHg), which is associated with a 10 per cent risk reduction for cardiovascular disease.

The “peanut group” ate 35g of peanuts twice a day, 30 minutes before two of their main meals. Participants in the control (nonpeanut) group did not consume peanuts or peanut butter.

Both groups restricted their energy intakes to 5500kJ (for women) and 7000kJ (for men) and kept their exercise patterns constant throughout the study.