



News

New Research: An Avocado A Day Keeps Bad Cholesterol Away - 17/03/2015

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A new study has shown eating an avocado a day as part of a moderate-fat diet is almost twice as effective as a lower-fat diet in reducing "bad" LDL cholesterol.

The US study, published in the Journal of the American Heart Association, placed 45 overweight or obese people aged 20 -70years on three cholesterol-lowering diets for five weeks each– lower-fat diet without avocado, moderate-fat diet without avocado, and moderate-fat diet with one small avocado a day (136g).

Results showed the moderate-fat diet with avocado provided the greatest benefit for participants reducing "bad" LDL cholesterol by almost twice the amount of the lower-fat diet (an LDL reduction of 0.35mmol/L), compared to 0.19mmol/L).

The avocado diet also provided greater reductions in LDL particle number, small dense LDL, total cholesterol and triglycerides - all biomarkers for cardiovascular disease.

In addition to mono-unsaturated fatty acids, the researchers highlighted avocados also provided other bioactive components that could have contributed to the findings such as fibre and phytosterols.

Australian Avocado Nutrition Dietitian Ms Lisa Yates said clinical studies had consistently demonstrated a role for avocados in lowering cholesterol, a major risk factor for heart disease.

"These benefits have been shown by including avocado in a variety of diets and across a wide range of study participants, not just those who are overweight or obese," said Ms Yates.

"This latest study gives us another reason to encourage people to eat a heart-healthy diet that includes avocados and other nutrient-rich food sources of better fats. This is in line with the Australian Dietary Guidelines that suggest switching saturated fats such as butter for monounsaturated fats like avocado.

"To gain health benefits from eating avocados, we recommend a quarter of a large avocado a day (50g). It's as simple as starting your day with avocado on toast."

¹Wang L et al. Effect of a Moderate Fat Diet With and Without Avocados on Lipoprotein Particle Number, Size and Subclasses in Overweight and Obese Adults: A Randomized, Controlled Trial, Am Heart Assoc. 2015; 4: e001355 <http://jaha.ahajournals.org/content/4/1/e001355.abstract>

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