

New Study Shows Eating Beans and Chickpeas is Linked to Better Diet Quality in American Adults

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/EINPresswire.com/ -- A [recently](#)

[published study in Maturitas](#), an open-access, monthly peer-reviewed medical journal covering midlife and post-reproductive health, demonstrates that eating beans (including canned and/or dry packaged kidney beans, black beans, and/or pinto beans) and chickpeas is associated with

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*Yanni Papanikolaou, of
Nutritional Strategies Inc.*

greater intake of shortfall nutrients, including nutrients of public health concern, and significantly higher diet quality scores in both younger and older adults. This new research adds to the growing body of evidence that showcases the multiple benefits of including pulse crops (dry beans, chickpeas, dry peas, and lentils) as part of a healthy dietary pattern.

Using data from the National Health and Examination Survey (NHANES), 2001-2018, researchers modeled the addition of one and two servings of canned and dried beans and chickpeas in younger and older adults to assess the effect of increased bean and chickpea consumption, in

the typical American dietary pattern. They examined impact on shortfall-nutrient intakes and diet-quality outcomes. Results show significant increases in several shortfall nutrients, including dietary fiber, potassium, magnesium, iron, folate, and choline. In fact, adding either one or two servings of beans and/or chickpeas daily to the US typical dietary pattern significantly increased overall diet quality in both younger and older adults. Total diet quality, as measured by The Healthy Eating Index – 2015 scores, was 15-16% greater with one additional serving of beans and/or chickpeas, and 19-20% higher with two additional servings of beans and/or chickpeas relative to the US typical dietary pattern.

“We know that the majority of adults are not meeting established recommendations for beans, peas, and pulses,” states author Yanni Papanikolaou, of Nutritional Strategies Inc. “All it takes is the addition of one or two servings of canned pulses like dry beans and/or chickpeas to help close nutrient gaps and improve diet quality.” The study was funded by the [Coalition for the Advancement of Pulses](#) and [Cannedbeans.org](#).

The Healthy Eating Index (HEI) is a measure of diet quality used to assess how well a set of foods aligns with key recommendations and dietary patterns published in the Dietary Guidelines for Americans (Dietary Guidelines). Highest diet quality scores are associated with 24% decreased risk of cardiovascular disease, 31% reduced risk for coronary heart disease, 20% lowered risk for stroke, 23% decreased risk for diabetes, and 6% reduced risk for cancer.

These new findings advance the body of existing peer-reviewed studies that show the inclusion of pulses (dry beans, chickpeas, peas and lentils) as part of a healthy diet imparts countless health benefits, including: cardiovascular, metabolic, and gut protective effects; improved weight outcomes and low-grade inflammation; and a potential role in immune-related disease risk management. The nutrient density of beans and chickpeas and their contributions to diet quality have been documented by the most recent collaboration between the National Cancer Institute (NCI) and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to update the Healthy Eating Index (HEI) diet quality scale. , ,

“This research underscores the fact that pulses are nutritional powerhouses,” said Tim McGreevy, CEO, of USA Pulses. “The simple act of adding one to two servings of pulse crops to your diet has significant health benefits for adults.”

In both younger and older adults, this evaluation showed that pulses like beans contributed to a substantial increase in daily dietary fiber intake.^{iv} This is critical since fewer than one in 10 US adults meet fiber recommendations to maintain optimal digestive health and prevent chronic diseases, including cardiovascular disease, diabetes, obesity and certain cancers.

“The key takeaway from this latest research? Eat more pulses,” said Yanni Papanikolaou, “It is clear that dietary strategies that promote increased canned dry bean and pulse crop consumption may prove to have numerous public health benefits for younger and older American adults and should be considered when drafting new authoritative nutrition recommendations.”



Adding 2 servings (1 cup) of cooked beans* and/or chickpeas daily to the average US typical dietary pattern can increase overall diet quality by up to **20%**.

LEARN MORE
usapulses.org/cap

*beans include canned and/or dry packaged kidney beans, black beans, and/or pinto beans

CAP
The Coalition for the Advancement of Pulses

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The Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2020 – 2025 and the USDA's Choose My Plate indicate that dry beans, chickpeas, peas, and lentils can be considered as part of the vegetable or protein groups.

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ABOUT THE COALITION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF PULSES

The Coalition for the Advancement of Pulses (CAP) is an initiative led by the American Pulse Association (APA) with support from the USA Dry Pea and Lentil Council (USADPLC), the U.S. Dry Bean Council (USDBC), and the Pulse Foundation. The CAP coalition represents a collective of pulse crop growers, processors, manufacturers, and related organizations. CAP is committed to increasing the consumption of pulses in the United States by increasing research on the nutritional benefits of pulses and growing awareness about the many health benefits of pulse crops. For more information visit usapulses.org or contact CAP@usapulses.org

ABOUT CANNEDBEANS.ORG

Cannedbeans.org, sponsored by Bush's Best®, is a category-building marketing campaign aimed at promoting the universal health benefits of canned beans regardless of brand. Containing fiber, protein and iron, canned beans make it easy to add more plants to your diet and help people live longer, healthier lives. For more information, check out the latest tools, recipes, and resources below to learn more about the benefits of canned beans at www.cannedbeans.org.

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