

Eating Peaches, Plums and Nectarines Is Associated with Improved Nutrient Intake, Lower Body Weight and a Reduced Risk of Elevated Blood Pressure

What we eat affects our health:

According to the recently released USDA report *What America Eats*, one-third to one-half of Americans have inadequate intakes of vitamin E, magnesium, vitamin A and vitamin C. Additionally, less than 5 percent of the population are meeting the Adequate Intake values for potassium and dietary fiber.¹ In addition, average fruit intake in the United States was recently reported to be 1.6 servings per day, with over 50 percent of the population consuming less than one serving of fruit per day.²

It is estimated that 60 percent of American adults have hypertension (high blood pressure) or pre-hypertension, and the prevalence of hypertension has increased 10 percent over the last 10 years.³ In addition, according to the Centers for Disease and Prevention, an estimated 65 percent of American adults are overweight and 30 percent are obese, while 16 percent of children are overweight.⁴

A diet high in fruits may not only aid in weight control,⁵ but also has the additional benefit of reducing hypertension in people that are overweight.⁶

The study:

A study recently presented at the National Meeting of the American Dietetic Association examined the impact of consuming peaches, plums, and nectarines on nutrient intakes and health parameters, particularly those associated with the metabolic syndrome. The results indicated that compared to adult non-consumers, adult peach, plum and nectarine consumers had significantly higher intakes of dietary fiber, vitamin C, magnesium and potassium and significantly lower intakes of added sugars. Similarly,

¹ Moshefegh, A, Goldman, J, Cleveland, L. 2005. *What We Eat in America*, NHANES 2001-2002: Usual Nutrient Intakes from Food Compared to Dietary Reference Intakes. U.S. Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Research Service.

² Cook AJ, Friday JE (2004). Pyramid Servings Intakes in the United States 1999-2002, 1 Day. [Online]. Beltsville, MD: USDA, Agricultural Research Service, Community Nutrition Research Group, CNRG Table Set 3.0.

³ Wang, Y, Qiong Joanna Wang, QJ. 2004. The Prevalence of Prehypertension and Hypertension Among US Adults According to the New Joint National Committee Guidelines: New Challenges of the Old Problem. *Arch Intern Med.* 2004;164:2126-2134.

⁴ Centers for Disease and Prevention. Overweight and Obesity: Frequently asked questions. www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/obesity/faq/htm#adults.

⁵ Rolls BJ, Ello-Martin JA, Tohill BC. What can intervention studies tell us about the relationship between fruit and vegetable consumption and weight management? *Nutr Rev.* 2004;62:1-17.

⁶ Nowson CA, Worsley A, Margerison C, et al. 2005. Blood pressure change with weight loss is affected by diet type in men. *Am J Clin Nutr.* 81(5): 983-989.

compared to child non-consumers, children who consumed peaches, plums and nectarines had significantly greater intakes of fiber, potassium, magnesium and copper.

Peach, plum and nectarine consumers in both age categories had lower body weights than non-consumers. In adults, consuming peaches, plums and nectarines was associated with a reduced risk of elevated blood pressure and a reduced risk of elevated waist circumference, both metabolic syndrome risk factors. These results suggest that consuming peaches, plums and nectarines is positively associated with nutrient intake and reduced risk of elevated blood pressure.

What this means to you:

Eating peaches, plums and nectarines is associated with:

- **increased intakes of potassium, magnesium and dietary fiber, which are nutrients associated with cardiovascular health**
- **decreased risk of elevated blood pressure**
- **lower body weight**