**Want to fight diabetes? Eat a handful of walnuts everyday**

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A new study has revealed that eating a handful of walnuts everyday can lead to better diet and improvements in health risk factors among people at high risk of diabetes. The study revealed that the walnut diet was associated with improvements in blood vessel cell wall function and ‘bad’ cholesterol after six months, although it didn’t have any impact on blood pressure or blood glucose levels.

In the study, researchers assigned 112 people to either following a diet with dietary counselling designed to curb calorie intake, or one without. Within these two groupings, participants were randomly assigned to the daily inclusion of 56gm of walnuts in their diet or the complete avoidance of walnuts for a period of six months.

After a three month interlude, the intervention arms were reversed. The 31 men and 81 women, who were aged between 25 and 75, were all at high risk of developing diabetes. After taking account of influential factors, such as age, calorie and fatty acid intakes, and the amount of regular exercise taken, the analysis indicated that adding walnuts to the daily diet was associated with improved diet quality.

A walnut-rich diet was also associated with significantly improved endothelial cell function, irrespective of dietary counselling to curb calorie intake. The researcher concluded that their data suggested that inclusion of walnuts in the diet, with or without dietary counselling to adjust caloric intake, improved diet quality and might also improve (endothelial function), and reduce total and LDL cholesterol in this sample of adults at risk for diabetes. The study is published in the Journal BMJ Open Diabetes Research and Care.