

## ***PRESS RELEASE***

### **People who regularly eat yogurt gain less weight and are less likely to develop type 2 diabetes**

**People who eat yogurt every day are less likely to gain weight and develop type 2 diabetes than those who do not, according to the latest scientific research. Experts at the III World Congress of Public Health Nutrition in Spain have today discussed the most recent evidence demonstrating the benefits of regular yogurt consumption on health, and have urged more people to eat yogurt every day as part of a healthy, balanced diet.**

“Yogurt is a concentrated source of important nutrients that contribute to health in many different ways,” said Dr André Marette from the Heart and Lung Institute of Laval Hospital in Quebec, Canada. “Most dietary guidelines recommend two to three servings of dairy products each day, and all the evidence points to the importance of making yogurt one of them.”

#### **Yogurt helps reduce weight gain**

Two recent studies have demonstrated the potential benefits of yogurt in reducing weight gain and the risk of becoming overweight or obese. In the first study,<sup>1</sup> which followed more than 6500 people for 17 years, those who ate more than three servings of yogurt a week were found to gain 50% less weight during that time and to have around a 20% smaller waistline than those who ate less than one serving a week. The second study found that individuals who ate the most yogurt (an average of at least one yogurt a day) were least likely to become overweight or obese – reducing the risk by more than 10%.<sup>2</sup>

“Rising levels of overweight and obesity are a major concern across the globe and one of the most serious public health challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century,” said Professor Frans J Kok from the Division of Human Nutrition at Wageningen University in the Netherlands. “While further evidence is needed, these recent studies add to the growing body of evidence suggesting that yogurt may have a beneficial effect on weight gain.”

### **Yogurt helps prevent the development of type 2 diabetes**

Many studies have also confirmed the association between yogurt consumption and a reduced risk of developing type 2 diabetes – a condition causing high blood sugar levels that is more common in older people and those who are obese. The most recent published review of the scientific literature found a clear relationship between increased yogurt consumption and a reduced risk of type 2 diabetes in people consuming up to 120 grams (approximately one standard pot) of yogurt per day.<sup>3</sup> And in the latest study reported, researchers at Cambridge University found that people who ate approximately 4.5 standard pots of yogurt each week benefitted from a 28% reduction in the risk of developing type 2 diabetes.<sup>4</sup>

### **Even teenagers can protect their hearts by eating yogurt**

Many teenagers are already at risk of developing heart disease as a result of being overweight, having increased blood pressure or high cholesterol. The results of a recent Europe-wide survey<sup>5</sup> were presented at the meeting, with experts agreeing that girls and boys could potentially reduce their risk of developing heart disease by regularly eating yogurt. In this study involving more than 500 young people aged 12 to 17 years, girls who consumed yogurt and milk had fewer risk factors for heart disease than those who did not, and boys who consumed yogurt and milk were slimmer and fitter.

### **Incorporating yogurt into daily life for better health**

According to Dr. Marette, when choosing a yogurt to incorporate into a healthy daily diet, people should look for low fat, high protein products. In addition, yogurts with probiotics have the potential to act on gut micro-organisms to help reduce obesity-related diseases and those made from milk fortified with vitamin D could enhance the benefits of yogurt on health and type 2 diabetes.

“Eating yogurt on a regular basis is an important part of a balanced, healthy diet,” said Professor Luis A. Moreno from the University of Zaragoza in Spain. “By helping to reduce weight gain, obesity, and the development of type 2 diabetes, yogurt will not only help individuals to stay healthy, but could have an important impact on public health.”

### **References**

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2. Martinez-Gonzalez MA, Sayon-Orea C, Ruiz-Canela M, et al. Nutr Metab Cardiovasc Dis 2014 Jun 15. pii: S0939-4753(14)00197-5. doi: 10.1016/j.numecd.2014.05.015. [Epub ahead of print]
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4. O'Connor LM, Lentjes MA, Luben RN, et al. Diabetologia 2014;57(5):909-17.
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**About the Yogurt in Nutrition Initiative (YINI)**

The Yogurt in Nutrition Initiative for a Balanced Diet is a multi-year global, collaborative project led by the Danone Institute International (DII) in collaboration with the American Society for Nutrition (ASN) and the International Osteoporosis Foundation (IOF) which aims to evaluate the current evidence base on the nutritional impact of yogurt. The mission of the project is to uncover scientific data related to yogurt, stimulate new research and identify gaps in our understanding of the health effects of this food category in order to share this information with professionals and the public. <http://yogurtinnutrition.com>; Twitter: [@YogurtNutrition](https://twitter.com/YogurtNutrition)

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