

WELLNESS

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New USDA guidelines support beans, lentils for protein versus meat

BY ROBIN FOSTER
UPI.com

Beans, peas and lentils take center stage in newly proposed changes to dietary guidelines for Americans.

In a report released by an advisory committee to the Agriculture Department, experts suggest that the protein-packed legumes are the perfect substitute for red or processed meat. They came to that conclusion after analyzing scientific evidence on the topic.

If adopted, the new guidelines would emphasize plant-based proteins and also encourage people to eat more whole grains and less sugary drinks, salt and all processed foods.

"Compelling evidence was noted in the systematic reviews in which dietary patterns that had higher levels of beans, peas and lentils [often presented in the literature as "legumes"] were associated with beneficial health outcomes," the report stated.

Meanwhile, "systematic review evidence also consistently indicated that dietary patterns with higher intakes of red and processed meats were related to detrimental health consequences, whereas dietary patterns with higher intakes of fish and seafood were related to beneficial health outcomes."

Why the big push for legumes?

"There's strong evidence to suggest that a dietary pattern that is high in beans, peas and lentils is associated with lower chronic disease risk," Angela Odoms-Young, vice chair of the advisory committee and a professor of maternal and child nutrition at Cornell University, told NBC News.

How far did the committee go in endorsing beans, peas and lentils?

Under the existing dietary guidelines, the trio of vegetables are categorized as both vegetables and protein foods, but the committee recommended removing them from the vegetable group and putting them at the top of the list of protein-heavy foods. Why? To encourage people to eat more plant-based protein.

The updated guidelines take into account numerous published studies on long-term links between meat-based diets and chronic illnesses such as diabetes and heart disease.

Heart disease is the leading cause of death in the United States, and cutting back on meat and upping consumption of legumes could help counter that trend, Odoms-Young said.

"That's not saying that you can't eat animal protein, but how do you have a diet where you can increase the amount of plant-based protein in the diet," she said.

The report also recommends that people cut down on sweetened drinks and salt while increasing their whole grain intake to make up 50% of all grains eaten.

The report has been submitted to the Agriculture Department and the Department of Health and Human Services for review, and a 60-day public comment period is underway. If enacted, they would take effect next year and last until 2030.

"When we look at the evidence around how those things impact people's health, we see that the major diseases, chronic diseases, that are responsible for preventable deaths are linked to those excess consumptions [of unhealthy foods]," advisory committee member Cheryl Anderson told NBC News.

In crafting the proposed changes, the committee members said they weighed how to factor in differences in both socioeconomic status and access to grocery stores.

"We are making these recommendations with the hope that no matter where people live, learn, work, play or pray, they would be able to follow the guidance," Anderson said.



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The most common cause of an itchy nose is allergic rhinitis, also known as seasonal allergies or hay fever, says Don Beasley, MD.

Itchy nose? Find out what's causing it and how to get relief fast

BY JENNA FANELLI
Woman's World

If you've ever griped: "Why is my nose so itchy?," you know the annoyance of having to continuously scratch due to nasal itching. Not only is it uncomfortable, but it can be hard to pinpoint exactly what's causing it. We asked doctors about the most common reasons for an itchy nose and home remedies that can help quell irritation.

Also known as seasonal allergies or hay fever, allergic rhinitis is the most common cause of an itchy nose, says Don Beasley, MD, Otolaryngologist and owner of Boise ENT. If you've ever noticed how both the inside *and* the outside of your nose get itchy after encountering pollen from trees, grass and weeds, dust or furry pets, that's your body reacting to the allergen by releasing histamines. These cause your nose to become inflamed and itch, he explains. You may also experience nasal itchiness from allergies to dust mites or mold.

And an allergic reaction doesn't stop at things like pollen or pet dander. You may also get an itchy nose when you eat food you're allergic to. This happens when your body reacts to a protein (or proteins) in certain foods. Common offenders include apples and celery,

which can trigger a reaction known as oral allergy syndrome (OAS). It affects up to 75% of adults who are also allergic to birch tree pollen.

Dry air is another prevalent trigger. This can be due to indoor heating, cold outside air or spending time in an area with low humidity. A lack of moisture in the air dehydrates the nasal lining, leaving it prone to cracking, itching and even minor bleeding, explains Randall Turner, DO, Dual Board-Certified Physician and Medical Director at Able To Change Recovery.

You probably associate eczema and psoriasis with arms or legs, but they can affect your nose too, says Dr. Beasley. Eczema might leave the skin around your nose dry and flaky, thanks to a damaged skin barrier. And psoriasis could cause inflamed, itchy areas on the skin of your nose, he explains.

HOME REMEDIES FOR AN ITCHY NOSE

In most cases, you can care for nasal itch at home using these simple, natural fixes.

Try a saline spray: For any pollutants or allergens irritating the inside of your nose, a saline nasal spray or rinse is one of the most effective methods for relief, says Dr. Turner. It works by hydrating dry nasal passages and flushing out allergens and irritants, he explains.

"Use an over-the-counter isotonic saline spray 1-2 times per nostril, up to 3-4 times daily," Dr. Turner recommends. "Consider a neti pot or squeeze bottle with a saline solution for a deeper clean, but always use distilled or previously boiled [then cooled] water to prevent infections."

Dr. Beasley also suggests opting for a solution without preservatives to avoid more irritation.

Switch on a humidifier: "Adding moisture to your indoor air can work wonders for an itchy nose," says Dr. Turner. "It prevents the nasal lining from drying out and helps maintain optimal hydration."

Just place a humidifier in your bedroom or main living area, aiming for a humidity level between 40% and 60%, he says. It's also important to clean the device weekly to prevent mold and bacteria growth.

Use a soothing moisturizer: Applying a thin layer of petroleum jelly or a saline-based nasal gel to the inside of your nostrils helps lock in moisture and soothe dryness, says Dr. Turner. A ceramide cream is also a quality option, adds Dr. Beasley, as it helps restore your skin's natural barrier to protect against dryness. You can use a clean cotton swab to apply a small amount once or twice a day.

Apply a cool compress: "A cool compress can work very

well for soothing skin irritation externally," says Dr. Turner. "Just place a clean cloth over the itchy area for about 10-15 minutes whenever discomfort kicks in." While this won't restore moisture, it *will* calm the itch in just minutes.

Manage allergies: Treating underlying allergies is an important step in preventing symptoms like nasal itch. Over-the-counter (OTC) antihistamines can help block histamines, ease nasal congestion and reduce itching, says Dr. Turner. "Non-drowsy antihistamines like loratadine [Claritin] or cetirizine [Zyrtec] can be taken daily during allergy seasons," he notes. "For more localized relief, consider a nasal antihistamine spray, such as azelastine, as directed by your doctor."

Calm skin flares: The best way to care for a condition like eczema or dermatitis that's triggering an itchy nose is to apply a fragrance-free moisturizer twice daily, preferably one formulated for sensitive skin, offers Dr. Turner. For flare-ups from eczema, a thin layer of 1 percent hydrocortisone cream can help reduce inflammation. Just be sure to limit its use to no more than a week, he says. Overuse can thin the skin.

Stay hydrated and eat healthy fats: Drinking enough water (aim for at least 64 ounces a day) keeps your nasal passages moist. And eating plenty of omega-3-rich foods like salmon, walnuts or flaxseeds can support your skin and mucosal health, explains Dr. Turner.

Persistent or worsening nasal itch is a sign to see a medical provider, says Dr. Beasley. A doctor can help figure out if you're dealing with a root cause like chronic rhinitis or sinusitis and come up with a proper treatment plan.

Man shares what exercise, healthy eating can do in less than a year

BY LUCY NOTARANTONIO
Newsweek Life

Dario Cordes has shared two images of himself standing in the same flamingo print swim trunks on Reddit. But in the second, he looks notably different. The 38-year-old is 36 pounds lighter in the second image, achieved through a commitment to three CrossFit sessions per week and the adoption of a healthier diet.

The dad-of-one, who lives in Argentina, weighed 194 pounds at his heaviest at the start of the year. After 10 months, he weighed around 158.

He told Newsweek that a divorce and work stress as a co-founder of a building material company led to his weight gain.

In February, he walked past a CrossFit gym, which offers high-intensity fitness programs that focus on strength and condition-



Reddit/borisdehio

Dario Cordes wearing the same swim trunks on the beach, weighing 194 pounds on the left and around 158 on the right.

ing, and made some serious changes to his diet.

"I realized the best way to come out of such a situation is to improve yourself and learn to

love yourself again," he said.

"The first two months were hell," he said. "I was always sore or in pain, but now, almost a year later, it has become part of my

routine and I have learned to love the activities and the progress I see in my condition."

Indeed, the fitness regime that involves lifting weights, running, jumping, squats and more has been proven to boost more than one's physical health.

Research published in Integrative and Complementary Medicine highlighted significant mental health-related findings among 1,211 participants. Additionally, 23 participants noted symptom alleviation for mental health challenges, including reductions in anxiety and depression.

Alongside this, Cordes cut sugar completely out of his life along with processed foods like pastries and pizza.

He told Newsweek: "I have never counted calories; instead, I switched to small and frequent meals with fewer carbs and almost no bread or pastry. I have been concentrating on protein and healthy fats."

Today, he is like a new man who has a different outlook on life. "I am highly motivated and have an optimistic approach to almost every aspect of my life," he told Newsweek.