Can Eggs Actually Lower Risk of Heart Disease?

Chinese researchers examined survey data on 461,213 adults with an average age of 51 years old. None had a history of heart disease when they first joined the study. 83,977 of them developed heart disease or had a heart attack or stroke. Of those, 9,985 died of heart disease or stroke. More than half of the participants were followed for nine years or more. The average egg consumption among participants was half an egg daily. About 9 percent avoided eggs altogether and 13 percent consumed about one egg every day. The study found that people who typically eat an egg every day were less likely to have a heart attack or a stroke compared to those who didn't eat eggs at all.

Things to keep in mind:

- This study was an observational study using a questionnaire, so you can't make a definitive cause and effect conclusion
- Chinese who consume more eggs tend to be of a higher social class

Another recent study touting the benefits of egg consumption comes from the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition. This study concluded that there is no risk from eating up to twelve eggs a week.

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In this study, researchers recruited 128 participants. They were split into two groups. In the first group, they were instructed to consume two eggs per week, while the other half was instructed to eat 12 eggs per week.

Then, for three months, the participants were put on a diet

designed for weight loss. At this time they were told to omit saturated fats and instead to consume monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats. However, the egg consumption was not changed. Throughout the study participant's blood pressure, blood sugar, and cholesterol were monitored. In the end, volunteers went through multiple tests to see if the cardiovascular system was affected.

The study found that participants' heart health stayed pretty much the same.

Things to keep in mind:

- The "low egg" group ate more meat to make up for eating fewer eggs
- The Australian Egg Corporation funded the study

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Our Take on Eggs

Eggs are very high in dietary cholesterol, but they are low in saturated fat. High cholesterol in the blood restricts blood flow to our blood vessels. Eating cholesterol-rich foods can raise cholesterol levels in the blood, but not very much. New research is showing that cholesterol-rich foods do not significantly raise cholesterol, and the rise is not sustained. Saturated fats are not the problem either. The truth is, trans-fats and refined sugars raise cholesterol levels radically more than dietary cholesterol does, and lead to heart disease and pretty much every other common chronic ailment. No studies have shown that cholesterol consumption increase risk of disease. Also, while eggs raise LDL cholesterol, also stupidly known as "bad cholesterol," but eggs also increase levels of HDL, which is also known as "good cholesterol."

Regardless of where you stand on eggs, if you choose to eat

eggs, make sure you’re getting them from a small farm from free-range chickens. The best, most nutritious eggs have yolks should be more orange than yellow.

Related:

- *A Guide to Finding and Choosing The Healthiest Eggs*
- *Pasture-Raised Eggs Are a Nutritional Powerhouse*

Sources:

- *Egg Consumption & LDL Cholesterol Size* – NutrtionFacts.org
- *Unscrambling The Nutrition Science On Eggs* – NPR
- *Does Dietary Choline Contribute to Heart Disease?* – The Weston A. Price Foundation
- *Egg lovers rejoice! They don’t cause heart disease, says new study* – BigThink