

Eating more dietary pulses can increase fullness, may help manage weight

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Eating about one serving a day of beans, peas, chickpeas or lentils can increase fullness, which may lead to better weight management and weight loss, a new study has found.

A [systematic review](#) and meta-analysis of all available [clinical trials](#) found that people felt 31 per cent fuller after eating on average 160 grams of dietary pulses compared with a control diet, according to senior author Dr. John Sievenpiper of St. Michael's Hospital's Clinical Nutrition and Risk Factor Modification Centre.

His group's findings were published in the August issue of the journal *Obesity*.

Dr. Sievenpiper said that despite their known [health benefits](#), only 13 per cent of Canadians eat pulses on any given day and most do not eat a full serving, which is 130 grams or $\frac{3}{4}$ cup.

Pulses have a [low glycemic index](#) (meaning that they are foods that break down slowly) and can be used to reduce or displace animal protein as well as "bad" fats such as trans fat in a dish or meal.

Dr. Sievenpiper noted that 90 per cent of [weight loss](#) interventions fail, resulting in weight regain, which may be due in part to hunger and food cravings. Knowing which foods make people feel fuller longer may help them lose weight and keep it off.

He said the finding that pulses make people feel fuller was true across various age categories and Body Mass Indexes.

Although the analysis found pulses had little impact on "second meal food intake," the amount of food someone eats at his or her next meal, these findings support longer term clinical trials that have shown a weight loss benefit of dietary pulses.

Dr. Sievenpiper said another bonus from eating pulses is that they are Canadian crops.

"That means eating local, being more sustainable and receiving many health benefits," he said.

Dr. Sievenpiper's systematic review and meta-analysis included nine clinical trials involving 126 participants out of more than 2,000 papers screened.

Provided by St. Michael's Hospital

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