

Dairy not linked to increased heart disease: study

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Credit: University of Reading

'Blessed are the cheesemakers', misheard a character in the film *The Life of Brian*. Now nutritional scientists have shown that Monty Python may have been spot on.

Scientists at the University of Reading have found that people who ate diets with more cheese were not associated with increased risk of heart disease.

A team from Reading's Hugh Sinclair Unit of Human Nutrition and the Institute for Food, Nutrition and Health (IFNH) conducted the largest analysis of population cohort studies, representing almost a million participants and over 93,000 deaths, published in the *European Journal*

of Epidemiology.

The meta-analysis of 29 prospective cohort studies found that overall, diets high in [dairy products](#), did not lead to any increased occurrence of cardiovascular diseases (heart disease and stroke) or death.

Jing Guo, a nutrition scientist in IFNH at the University of Reading said:

"This latest analysis provides further evidence that a diet that is high in dairy foods is not necessarily damaging to health.

"The number of participants in particular gives us a really clear global picture of the neutral association of dairy on [heart disease](#) risk, and some indications about the potentially beneficial effect of fermented dairy on heart health, although further studies are needed to confirm this."

Professor Julie Lovegrove, Head of the Hugh Sinclair Unit of Human Nutrition, University of Reading said: "This supports previous findings that dairy foods, such as milk, cheese and yoghurts, can be part of a healthy, balanced diet. We will now be investigating the possible ways that dairy foods may impact on health."

Public Health England's current guidelines on dairy consumption recommend that [dairy](#) and alternatives form no more than 8 percent of a diet, and choose lower fat and lower sugar options where possible.

More information: Jing Guo et al. Milk and dairy consumption and risk of cardiovascular diseases and all-cause mortality: dose–response meta-analysis of prospective cohort studies, *European Journal of Epidemiology* (2017). [DOI: 10.1007/s10654-017-0243-1](https://doi.org/10.1007/s10654-017-0243-1)

Provided by University of Reading

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