

Quinn on Nutrition: An apple a day

October 11 2019, by Barbara Quinn



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Does an apple a day really keep the doctor away? I hope so, because my trees are groaning with hundreds of these beauties this year.

I decided to see if this old saying was true. And lo and behold, there really was a study published in the *Journal of the American Medical*

Association in 2015 entitled "Association between Apple Consumption and Physician visits."

"The aphorism, 'An apple a day keeps the doctor away,' originated in Wales," these researchers reported. It first appeared in a publication in 1866 in the format, "Eat an apple on going to bed and you'll keep the doctor from earning his bread."

These scientists decided to look at the self-reported diets of 8,728 adults to see if those who ate at least one small apple a day avoided extra trips to the doctor. Over the course of a year, they found that apple eaters really didn't visit their doctors less often than non-apple eaters.

They did find, however, that daily apple eaters tended to use fewer [prescription medications](#), which led one author to comment that "there may be merit to saying, 'An apple a day keeps the pharmacist away.' "

Still, the notion that apples are not that good for us is false. According to a more recent review on this topic by registered dietitian Kristin Sementelli, an apple a day—along with other healthful habits—can go a long way to help keep the doctor away. Here are some reasons worth noting:

Apples are nutrient dense. That means we get a good payment of nutrients for the calories we invest in apples. For just 95 calories in one medium (3-inch diameter) apple, we also get [essential nutrients](#) like vitamin C and potassium.

Apples are also known as a good source of soluble fiber—the type that helps lower blood cholesterol levels. Soluble fiber also helps fill a hungry tummy with no extra calories; so foods high in soluble fiber can be effective weight loss tools. Just make sure to eat your apples with the skin; that's where much of the soluble fiber resides.

Apples may guard against diabetes. Naturally-occurring phytochemicals in apples have been implicated as possible disease fighters, according to some research. For example, one study that looked at the diets of more than 10,000 men and women in Finland found that eating more apples was associated with a lower incidence of Type 2 diabetes.

Apples—and other fruits and vegetables—are good for our bones. One small study that looked at apples in particular found that women who snacked on fresh apples or [apple](#) sauce did not lose as much of the bone-builder, calcium, in their urine compared to when they ate candy.

With apples as well as other fruit, we're smart to eat them in their just-picked-off- the tree form if possible. Whole fruit (rather than juice) is where we get the fiber we need.

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