

Apples Cut Heart Disease, Metabolic Risk

SAN DIEGO, April 9, 2008 (UPI) -- Adult apple-product consumers had a 27 percent decreased likelihood of having metabolic syndrome when compared to non-consumers, a U.S. study found.

Dr. Victor Fulgoni analyzed adult food consumption data collected in the 1999-2004 National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey -- the government's largest food consumption and health database.

Adults who eat apples and applesauce and drink apple juice have a significantly reduced risk of metabolic syndrome -- defined as having three or more of the associated symptoms related to cardiovascular risk, including elevated blood pressure, increased waist size and elevated C-reactive protein levels.

The study found those who consumed apple products had a 30 percent decreased likelihood for elevated diastolic blood pressure and a 36 percent decreased likelihood for elevated systolic blood pressure and a 21 percent reduced risk of increased waist circumference.

"We found that adults who eat apples and apple products have smaller waistlines that indicate less abdominal fat, lower blood pressure and a reduced risk for developing what is known as metabolic syndrome," Fulgoni said in a statement.

Additionally, adult apple-product consumers had significantly reduced C-reactive protein levels -- a biomarker of inflammation used to detect increased risk for diabetes, hypertension and cardiovascular disease.

The findings are being presented at the Experimental Biology 2008 meeting this week in San Diego.