

[IMAGE]

## The Power of Potatoes

By Editorial Staff

Potatoes tend to get a bad rap, so much so that they often appear on "foods to avoid" lists, especially for people trying to lose weight. That's because they've been linked to an increased risk of insulin resistance, weight gain and type 2 diabetes. Why? Potatoes are primarily carbohydrate, which converts to sugar faster than protein or fat. What's more, potatoes are high in starch – a particular type of carbohydrate that, although complex (rather than simple), tends to convert to sugar faster than other complex carbs.

Now for the good news: Research suggests potatoes can be part of a healthy diet, even for people trying to lose weight and/or get their blood sugar under control. Published in the *Journal of Medicinal Food*, the study determined that eating potatoes *did not* elevate blood glucose levels; and *did not* negatively impact weight loss.

Study participants were overweight, obese and/or had insulin resistance (a hallmark sign of high blood sugar). Their diet for study purposes: a protein (meat or fish) and a carb (either beans / peas or potatoes), incorporated into lunch and dinner entrees. Beans / peas have been shown to reduce blood sugar in type 2 diabetics, so one would have expected participants eating them to fare better than participants eating potatoes instead.

potatoes - Copyright â Stock Photo / Register Mark Not the case, according to findings. After eight weeks on either diet, "Potato and Bean diets low in energy density were equally effective in reducing insulin resistance and promoting weight loss in individuals with impaired blood glucose control."

It's important to note that researchers prepared the potatoes in a special way: boiled with the skin intact, then served cold. Doing so maximizes fiber content. Fiber promotes weight loss by making you feel full and slowing down digestion. It also helps control blood sugar because the body can't break it down like it does with carbohydrate.

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