

Professor at Oklahoma State Studies Pulse Impact on Post-Menopausal Women

Have you ever wondered about the effects food has on your health? The food we eat can impact our health in a shorter amount of time and our health for the better. It has become increasingly popular of late to understand the impacts of certain types of foods on the human body. One professor at Oklahoma State has studied how consuming pulses (different types of beans) affects the health of post-menopausal women.

Dr. Edralin Lucas is a professor and researcher at Oklahoma State University who works in the nutritional science department studying the impact of pulse consumption on gut health, cardiovascular health, bone density, and more on post-menopausal women. Dr. Lucas recently finished a study where 42 women were taken and were asked to consume 100g of pulses (alternating between chickpeas, kidney beans, pinto beans, black-eyed peas, and lentils) daily for 12 weeks, and to maintain their normal diet and lifestyle (1). The study aimed to see if there was any change in bone density after three months of pulse consumption and if there was an improvement in gut health. The study returned exciting results, with Dr. Lucas stating, “Yes, it was very good. At the end of the three weeks, we could see positive bone changes in some of the women.” Dr. Lucas’s recent publication over this research also indicated that the gut health in the women also yielded positive results stating, “Constipation score significantly improved ($p=0.003$)... fecal acetic acid ($p<0.001$), n-butyric ($p=0.038$), n-caproic ($p=0.004$) and total short chain fatty acids (SCFAs) ($p=0.001$) were also significantly increased

with pulse supplementation” (1). The new research by

Dr. Lucas and her lab are new and exciting; when asked how they went about collecting the samples from these women, she explained that:

“Each participant was given a calendar where they wrote down what they ate daily.” In an ideal situation, each woman would consume 100g of pulses daily. However, Dr. Lucas explained that most of the time, it was left up to trust that each woman consumed the 100g and honestly recorded what they ate. The study also recorded stool samples of each participant and did full-body dual x-ray absorptiometry (DEXA), a full body x ray that can give very specific insight into bone density. This imaging was used to sample the bone density changes.

Dr. Lucas was also asked what she would tell the general public about her research if she got the chance, to which she replied, “The food you eat is so impactful to your health. Even just the small changes can hold a big difference to help.”

The research done by Dr. Lucas of Oklahoma State and her laboratory is new and exciting; hopefully, it can soon help many women. In recent news, Dr. Lucas also told us that after the initial nine-month funding for the recent study, up to 20 women would like to return for further study. Be on the lookout for more of Dr. Lucas’s exciting research shortly.

Reference:

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