



March 2017

Go nuts for nuts – and seeds too!

It makes sense that nuts and seeds are good for you. They pack a lot of power into a small space. Just think about it — a 300-foot-tall redwood grows from a 1/8-inch-long seed. In your diet, nuts and seeds are little dynamos of nutrition and taste. They're among the unsung heroes of the superfood world. What makes them so healthy?

- All nuts and seeds contain protein and good fats with an assortment of vitamins, minerals, and beneficial plant chemicals. A serving size is a small handful or 1 ounce of shelled nuts.
- Eating nuts is good for you. A recent review of 20 studies found that people who regularly ate nuts reduced their heart disease risk by 29 percent. Cancer risk went down by 15 percent. There was also a 52 percent reduction in diabetes risk.
- Eating small amounts of nuts may help dieters lose weight. Researchers at Pennsylvania State have found that the fat and fiber content of nuts helped dieters feel more full for longer.

Your guide to healthy nuts and seeds

All nuts and seeds will go rancid over time, so keep them in airtight containers. Don't buy them in bulk if you don't plan to use them within a month or two. If you're using nuts in a recipe, taste one to make sure they're still fresh.

Calorie counts are from shelled nuts.

Almonds: 163 calories/ounce

If you avoid dairy, calcium-rich almonds are a good choice to ensure you're getting enough of this bone-building mineral. Eat almonds with their skin on, not blanched almonds, because the skin is full of heart-protecting compounds called flavonoids.

Brazil nuts: 186 calories/ounce

Brazils are a good source of selenium, an antioxidant that may help support a healthy immune system and help wounds heal. You only need three or four Brazil nuts a day to get all the selenium you need.

Cashews: 157 calories/ounce

Because they contain protein, iron, and zinc, cashews are an excellent choice for vegetarians. They provide magnesium, a mineral that helps regulate blood pressure and keep bones strong. Add a handful to a veggie stir-fry or enjoy cashew butter on crackers.

QuickTakes



By nature, some foods have higher levels of nutrients compared with others. Some are richer in compounds that may have health benefits. These nutrient-dense foods are often hyped as "superfoods," which some believe help prevent disease.

Regarding cancer prevention, superfoods may not be as powerful as some had once thought. Dr. Walter Willett of the Harvard School of Public Health was recently quoted as saying "The [cancer-fighting] benefit is probably very small and limited to certain foods and certain cancers."

Regarding heart disease, Dr. Penny Kris-Etherton of Pennsylvania State University reports, "Many so-called 'super' foods are good for your heart and your overall health when part of a heart-healthy diet."

While superfoods may not be miracle cure-alls, they are healthy foods that should be included in a well-balanced diet. This month's newsletter looks at adding healthy nuts to your diet.



Your guide to healthy nuts & seeds (continued)

Hazelnuts: 178 calories/ounce

Hazelnuts, also called filberts, are a good source of B vitamins including folate. These sweet-tasting nuts show up in traditional French and Viennese pastries and chocolates. They're a great addition to weeknight salads too.

Macadamias: 204 calories/ounce

Their high calorie count and buttery taste are thanks to a high (and healthy) fat content. A real treat when added to banana bread or muffins.

Peanuts: 161 calories/ounce

About half the U.S. peanut crop ends up in peanut butter. Make your peanut butter sandwich doubly healthy by choosing a hearty, whole-grain sandwich bread.

Pecans: 196 calories/ounce

Buttery, rich pecans are a favorite for eating out of hand. They're loaded with antioxidants, good fats, vitamins, and fiber too.

Pine nuts (pignoli): 191 calories/ounce

A must for traditional basil pesto, pine nuts are expensive because they're so hard to extract from the pinecone. Toast to bring out their piney flavor and add to salads.

Pistachios: 160 calories/ounce

The distinct pistachio-green color of chopped pistachios dresses up fish fillets, cheese balls and fancy pastries. The little nuts provide calcium, iron, and vitamin A.

Pumpkin seeds (pepitas): 125 calories/ounce

A popular ingredient in Mexican food; toast briefly to bring out their delicate flavor. Pumpkin seeds are high in magnesium and zinc.

Sunflower seeds: 162 calories/ounce

Sandwiched between the cheese crackers and toaster pastries in the office vending machine, sunflower seeds are a superior choice when you need a snack to stave off hunger. They're delicious in salads or pilafs.

Walnuts: 185 calories/ounce

A good source of heart-friendly fats. Make a memorable salad with bitter greens, crumbled blue cheese and toasted walnuts.

Source: <https://bmcmedicine.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12916-016-0730-3>

Pecan-Crusted Salmon Makes 4 servings

INGREDIENTS

No pecans on hand? Try cashews, almonds, or pistachios instead.

3 tablespoons pure maple syrup
 1 tablespoon olive or avocado oil
 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
 1/2 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
 1/4 teaspoon salt, plus extra for sprinkling
 1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
 4 salmon filets (5-6 oz. each, skin removed)
 2/3 cup chopped pecans
 Lemon wedges, for serving

DIRECTIONS

1. In a shallow bowl, combine with a fork maple syrup, oil, mustard, Worcestershire sauce, salt, and pepper. Slide salmon fillets into the marinade, turning to coat both sides evenly. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate at least 30 minutes or up to 2 hours.
2. Preheat the oven to 375°F. Line a baking pan with parchment paper. Remove the salmon from the fridge. Spread chopped pecans on a plate. Dip the top side of each fillet in the pecans and place nut-side-up on the prepared baking sheet. Season very lightly with salt.
3. Bake the fish until cooked through, 12 to 17 minutes. Serve with lemon wedges.



NUTRITIONAL INFORMATION

324 Calories
 14 g Fat
 3 g Saturated fat
 31 g Protein
 20 g Carbohydrate
 2 g Dietary fiber
 340 mg Sodium

Source: Healthy Living Kitchens