

Nuts about...nuts!

Nuts to you!

Just a small handful of nuts is packed with protein, other nutrients, fiber and health-protective plant substances. Stick to a small serving so calories don't add up. In fact, 1½ ounces of nuts a day may reduce your chance of heart disease if the saturated fats and cholesterol in your food choices are low!

Different nuts have different benefits: almonds for the most fiber, almonds and hazelnuts for the most vitamin E (an antioxidant), pecans for more cancer-fighting ellagic acid, Brazil nuts for more selenium (another antioxidant), cashews and pistachios for more potassium, walnuts for omega-3 fatty acids. Many nuts also have phytic acid, which may reduce cancer risk and help control blood sugar, cholesterol and triglycerides.

Wonder about the fat? It's mostly monounsaturated—the kind that doesn't raise your blood cholesterol. And nuts are cholesterol-free, too.

Pick an easy nutritious culinary idea today.

Nuts=Weight Loss?

Despite nuts being high in fat and calories, new research indicates that nuts can also aid in weight loss.

Researchers at Purdue University have found that adding almonds to a calorie-controlled eating plan can assist in weight loss. Although the study was short-term and small in sample size, it does demonstrate that people were able to eat nuts and control or lose weight.

How? The mechanism is still unclear, but the researchers think that the fat content in nuts may promote satiety, the feeling that you're full, or the protein in nuts may burn more calories during digestion.

Nuts are high in calories but are also cholesterol-free and they provide good sources of protein, phosphorus, zinc, magnesium, vitamin E and selenium. In small portions, nuts can be a healthful food choice.

Savor the Flavor

Nuts are high in fat, but the fat in most nuts is healthy, monounsaturated fat, which can help lower blood cholesterol. Good sources of monounsaturated fats include peanuts, pecans, walnuts and almonds.

In addition, research studies have shown that many different nuts are helpful in reducing the risk of cancer and elevated blood pressure.

Nuts also provide protein, carbohydrates and a wide variety of vitamins and minerals.

But wait, there's more. New research shows that eating plans that include nuts are more satisfying, leading people to eat less and control their weight. So enjoy nuts in your eating plan. The key is watching your serving sizes.

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