

DECEMBER: NUTS

Tree nuts, such as almonds, cashews, hazelnuts, macadamias, pecans, pine nuts, pistachios, and walnuts, may help reduce the risk for chronic diseases such as heart disease, diabetes and some forms of cancer. In addition to their great taste, all **nuts** are cholesterol-free and full of important nutrients, including protein, fiber, and phytochemicals. They are also a great source of vitamins, including folic acid, and minerals. The majority of the fat in tree **nuts** is unsaturated or "good" fat (i.e., mono and polyunsaturated fats). The key to including **nuts** in your diet without adding extra fat and calories is *portion control*. As little as one handful—or one ounce—of **nuts** per day can provide nutritional benefits. More than that, you may find yourself consuming too many calories!

CHECK OUT SOME VARIETIES OF HEALTHY NUTS DESCRIBED BELOW!



Almonds are the most nutritionally-dense nuts. A one ounce, 160-calorie serving of almonds is an excellent source of vitamin E, magnesium, and fiber.



Walnuts are high in omega-3 fatty acids that are great for our bodies! They have lots of healthy fiber as well, and taste great slightly toasted.



Cashews are a very good source of monounsaturated fats, copper, magnesium, and phosphorous. They are fairly high-calorie, so be sure to practice portion control!



Hazelnuts are an excellent source of vitamin E, protein, and fiber. Hazelnuts also have the highest concentration of folate among tree nuts. They taste great as a "butter" as well!



Macadamia nuts are full of important nutrients like monounsaturated fats, proteins, dietary fiber, vitamins, and minerals. Popular in Hawaii, grab some and enjoy their unique flavor!



Peanuts are not really a nut but a goober and a member of the pea family! When you buy peanut butter, be sure to go for the healthiest, *all-natural, no sugar added* kind (yes, you have to stir it the first time, then store it in the fridge to keep it from separating again!).

Nuts Tips

- Mix **walnuts**, raisins, and no/low-sugar oatmeal, with skim milk or nonfat Greek yogurt, for a quick and easy breakfast.
- For extra flavor add raisins, cranberries, and a handful of **walnuts** to your healthy spinach salads.
- Wake up your green bean side dish by stirring in a handful of **almonds**.
- Add nuts like **pecans**, **almonds**, and **walnuts** to your reduced fat Greek yogurt for some added crunch.
- Crumble **macadamias**, **pistachios**, or **pecans** onto grilled fish and serve with wedges of lemon/lime.
- Pick a day of the week to roast your **walnuts**, **pecans**, **almonds**, or other nuts for use all week - roast in the oven/toaster oven, store in a container in the fridge, so you can quickly top salads or Greek yogurt with roasted nuts!

Nuts Recipe!

YUMMY PEANUT (OR CASHEW)-ENHANCED VEGGIE STIR-FRY

Makes 4 Servings

Ingredients

- 1 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 1 red pepper, chopped
- 1 green pepper, chopped
- 1 yellow pepper, chopped
- 1 yellow onion, chopped
- ½ tsp ground pepper
- 2 tbsp soy sauce
- 1 tsp corn starch
- ½ cup finely chopped **peanuts or cashews**
- Fresh basil (optional)

Over medium-high heat in frying pan, sauté first five ingredients in oil till peppers are slightly tender. In small bowl, stir together soy sauce and cornstarch. Turn off heat then pour soy sauce mixture into veggies, stirring continuously, then stir in nuts and fresh basil. Serve as is or on top of brown rice. (Optional: Stir in 1 cup cooked chopped chicken or pork).

Nuts Recipes!

WALNUT GRANOLA – GREAT FOR BREAKFAST OR AS A SNACK!!

Makes 8 servings

Ingredients

- 1 ½ cups chopped **walnuts** (slightly roasted for more flavor!)
- 4 cups rolled oats (not instant)
- 2 cups wheat bran
- ¼ cup honey
- 2 tsp. vanilla
- 1 ½ cups raisins (or other mixed dried fruit)

In a large bowl, stir together oatmeal, bran, and walnuts, stir to mix. In small microwavable bowl, combine honey and vanilla; microwave on high for about 20 seconds, or more, until runny. Pour over dry ingredients, and toss to coat well.

Use on top of nonfat Greek yogurt, or with skim milk for breakfast – grab a small handful for a quick snack on the run!

BROCCOLI-WALNUT WHOLE WHEAT NOODLES

Makes 4 Servings

Ingredients

- 10 oz. whole wheat fettuccine or spaghetti noodles
- 2 lbs. broccoli (florets and peeled stems, cut in 1/2-inch slices)
- 1 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- ½ cup finely chopped **walnuts**
- Juice of one lemon (or 3 tbsp bottled lemon juice)
- Juice of 1/2 orange (or 2 tbsp of orange juice)
- Grated zest of one lemon
- ½ tsp ground pepper

Cook noodles to al dente, according to package instructions. Steam broccoli until tender, about 3-5 minutes. Heat olive oil over medium-high heat and then add walnuts. Sauté for about 1 minute. Combine noodles and broccoli in serving bowl, then add walnut-oil mixture and toss well. Add citrus juices, zest, and pepper and toss well again. (Optional: Add 1/2 cup diced smoked turkey).