

## Why we are nuts about eating nuts



*There isn't a nut I have met that I haven't liked, and these nuts are a great way to stay healthy.*

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If being healthy is important to you, then you're probably already aware of the amazing benefits of adding nuts and seeds to your diet. While you'll always hear someone say to avoid fat, the healthy fats in these powerful little snacks are something you want. Like the avocado, nuts are a great source of [healthy fats](#) that you want to add to your diet, just watch your portion control. These small crunchy little treats can blow up your calorie intake if you are not careful.

### **Five nuts you want to eat**

The pistachio is loaded with nutrients and antioxidants, low in calories, and high in HDL's (this is the good kind of [cholesterol](#)).

According to healthline.com, a 28 gram serving a day will help lower blood pressure, help with losing weight, reduce the risk of heart disease, and may help reduce blood sugar if eaten after a meal.

The walnut, like the pistachio, is a great heart-smart nut to add to your diet. The high levels of Omega-3 fatty acids will help with lowering your cholesterol and blood pressure. Walnuts are also known to help improve your cognitive abilities. According to the National Institute of Health, Walnuts contain Vitamin E, which is a neuroprotective compound and has been shown to increase inferential reasoning. Omega-3's will also help slow the rate of bone density loss.

Cashews are also part of the tree nut family and contain Vitamin E and Magnesium.

According to The National Institute of Health, people suffering from Metabolic Syndrome will want to add cashews to their diet, as it will help with blood pressure, increase the antioxidant potential in your diet, and increase blood sugar.

While not technically a nut, the peanut is actually a legume but has most of the same health benefits of other nuts.

With high levels of Vitamin E and Magnesium, these nuts are great for lowering your risk of heart disease, and one study found that those who frequently eat peanuts have a lower death rate.

For women, studies found lower rates of Type 2 Diabetes in women who eat peanut butter more than five times a week, and women who eat peanuts while pregnant have children with a lower risk of asthma and allergic reactions.

The downside of peanuts is that they are mostly consumed in peanut butter, which has high levels of fat and other chemicals that can counteract the healthy benefits.

Macadamia nuts contain high levels of monosaturated fats, which is the good kind of fat your body needs. This very heart-friendly nut is even part of the American Heart Association approved diet. If you have high cholesterol, the macadamia nut will help lower your cholesterol levels. Please consult your doctor before making changes to any diet that you are following per doctor's recommendations.

## **Some fun facts**

The pistachio has a few different names depending on where you go. In China, it is known as "the happy nut," in Iran, it is known as the "the smiling nut," and it is also called the green almond.

Over ninety-eight percent of pistachios for the United States are grown in California, but Iran is the largest grower of pistachios in the world. This tasty treat is one of the oldest flowering nut trees in the world and has been enjoyed by us for over nine thousand years.

Walnuts are the oldest tree food known to man. According to US News, the Walnut tree can be traced back to 7,000 BC. You'll want to store these nuts in the refrigerator, as they can go bad after a few weeks.

Did you know the tiny cashew has not one, but two days dedicated to this nut? April 21st is National Chocolate Covered Cashew Day and November 23rd is

National Cashew Day. Apparently, they are so good they need two days to celebrate.

This nut is not just used for food. The oil from the cashew shell is used in brake linings and insecticides and is also toxic, which is why the cashew is not sold in its shell.

A nut by any other name is still a nut, and that is very true for the peanut. Not technically part of the nut family, there are four types of peanuts: Runner, Virginia, Spanish, and Valencia. Like the cashew, it has two days dedicated to it. March 8th is National Peanut Cluster Day and September 12th is National Peanut Day. Did you know that Arachibutyrophobia is the fear of getting peanut butter stuck to the roof of your mouth? Must be a dog thing.

If you've ever been to Hawaii, you've seen macadamia farms everywhere, and you probably came home with a bag or two.

I know I did. First introduced to Hawaii in 1881, they are the largest grower of macadamia nuts in the world. The first commercial planting of the macadamia nut was not until 1921. The shell of the macadamia is the hardest shell of all nuts, taking around 300 pounds of pressure to crack this tough nut.

With any heart-healthy diet, and especially with nuts, moderation is key. Nuts are high in fat and they are easy to munch on throughout the day and build up your calorie intake. Nuts make a great midday snack and can be taken anywhere, so enjoy and be healthy.