



February 2014



A Healthy Handful: The Latest Research

Each year a significant number of new research papers are published that continue to build on the body of science supporting the health benefits of eating a handful (30g) of nuts a day. Below are summaries of some of the latest nutty research.

In a nutshell: A new paper released from the PREDIMED study – the world's largest study on the Mediterranean diet – has revealed eating a handful of mixed nuts daily may slow the thickening of artery walls and plaque build-up. Researchers say this may be one of the reasons a Mediterranean diet supplemented with mixed nuts has been shown to reduce the risk of heart disease by 28 per cent, compared to a lower fat diet.

The details:

Results from the PREDIMED study show a Mediterranean diet enriched with 30g serve of mixed nuts reduces the risk of cardiovascular events such as stroke, heart attacks and death from cardiovascular disease by 28 per cent, compared to a lower fat control diet. Yet the mechanisms of cardiovascular protection remained unknown.

The PREDIMED researchers analysed the data of 175 trial participants that followed either the lower fat control diet, the Mediterranean diet enriched with a handful of mixed nuts a day, or the Mediterranean diet enriched with extra virgin olive oil (EVO). They specifically looked at thickness of artery walls and plaque height - ultrasound features that best predict the likelihood of atherosclerosis or cardiovascular events in subjects at high cardiovascular risk.

Compared with the control diet and the Mediterranean diet enriched with EVO, eating a Mediterranean diet supplemented with a handful of mixed nuts a day was associated with delayed progression artery wall thickening and plaque.



New research reveals WHY a Med Diet + a handful of nuts a day reduces risk of heart disease @NutsForLife #PREDIMED <http://1.usa.gov/1gyDGFK>

In a Nut shell: A new study by researchers at Loma Linda University has shown that people who eat a handful of nuts at least once or twice a week have a reduced risk of Metabolic Syndrome – a cluster of conditions including high blood cholesterol, blood glucose, insulin, blood pressure and weight which can lead to heart disease, diabetes and obesity.

The details: Researchers at Loma Linda University studied 803 Seventh-day Adventist adults using a food questionnaire and assessed their intake of tree nuts (almonds, Brazil nuts, cashews, hazelnuts, macadamias, pecans, pine nuts, pistachios and walnuts) and peanuts.

The results, published in the online journal PLOS ONE, showed eating a handful (30g) of tree nuts a week was associated with a seven per cent reduction in Metabolic Syndrome. Researchers said increasing tree nut consumption to two handfuls a week could potentially reduce Metabolic Syndrome risk by 14 per cent.



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Tree nuts specifically appeared to provide beneficial effects on Metabolic Syndrome, independent of demographic, lifestyle and other dietary factors.

In addition, the researchers also looked at the effect of tree nut consumption on obesity and found that high tree nut consumers had significantly lower prevalence of obesity compared to the low tree nut consumers.



New research: Eating a handful of nuts once or twice a week may reduced the risk of Met S <http://bit.ly/1eJEU6i>.

In a nut shell: New research by the Institute of Food Science & Technology, Fuzhou University China has uncovered the prebiotic potential of nuts, showing that two handfuls of almonds a day can promote the growth of good gut bacteria while limiting the growth of harmful bacteria.

The details: The study, published online ahead of print in the April edition of Anaerobe Journal, investigated the prebiotic effects of almond and almond skin intake in healthy adults.

A total of 48 healthy adult volunteers consumed a daily dose of roasted almonds (56g) and almond skins (10g) for six weeks. Stool tests taken during the study and compared to the control group showed significant increases in good bacteria - Bifidobacterium spp. and Lactobacillus spp - while growth of harmful bacteria slowed or stopped.

The researchers concluded that almonds and almond skins possess potential prebiotic properties.



New research reveals prebiotic potential of almonds with just 2 handfuls a day promoting gut health <http://1.usa.gov/1qDivRE> @NutsForLife

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Issued on behalf of Nuts For Life

Nuts for life is Australia's leading nutrition authority on tree nuts ad health. The nutrition education initiative, funded by the Australian Tree Nut Industry and Horticulture Australia, aims to educate Australians about the nutrition and health benefits of regular tree nut consumption. Web - www.nutsforlife.com.au Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/Nuts4Life> Twitter - @NutsForLife

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