

Nuts and Weight



A FACTSHEET FOR CLIENTS AND PATIENTS

Because nuts are an energy dense food with a high fat content, there is a widespread perception that eating nuts causes weight gain.



But decades of research show that this is not true. Nuts are actually associated with a decreased risk of being overweight or obese, and regularly eating nuts reduces body weight, Body Mass Index (BMI) and waist circumference^[1].

How many nuts do I need to eat?

Aim to eat at least one handful (~30g) every day. But there's no reason why you can't eat more – research suggests that you can eat up to 120g nuts each day without gaining weight^[1].

Which nuts are best?

All nuts have a positive effect on weight, so enjoy a variety of nuts every day. However, it's best to enjoy raw or roasted, unsalted nuts as your everyday choice, saving salted nuts for special occasions.



How do nuts help manage weight?

- An abundance of healthy fats, fibre and protein mean **nuts satisfy hunger and reduce your appetite**. A handful of nuts releases satiety hormones in the digestive system which help tell you when you're full.
- The fibrous cell walls in nuts **stop our bodies absorbing up to 15% of the kilojoules (or calories)** in nuts.
- Eating nuts can significantly **reduce the number of calories consumed** at later meals – i.e. you'll eat less.
- Regularly eating nuts can boost your resting metabolic rate by 5–10%, meaning that your **body is burning more kilojoules (or calories)**.

What does all this mean?

Regularly eating nuts can actually help you maintain a healthy body weight and does not cause weight gain.

To put it simply, you can eat nuts and manage your weight too.

In addition to managing your weight, there is also strong evidence for nuts in reducing the risk of diabetes^[3], developing heart disease^[4], supporting brain health and reducing the risk of cancer^[5].



Ideas for adding nuts to your diet

- Add a handful of nuts to your morning cereal or breakfast smoothie.
- Keep a small container of nuts in your bag so you can snack on the go.
- Toss a handful of nuts through your salad for a delicious, healthy crunch.
- Mix nuts into home-made muffins, cakes or slices.



References

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