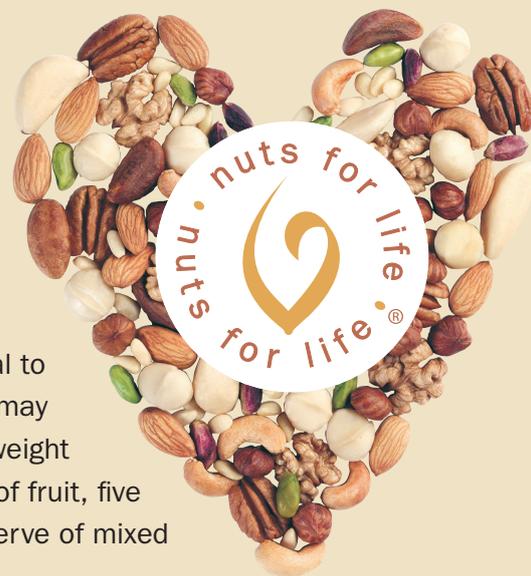


# Mixed nuts

How do you get all the benefits of various tree nuts in one package? A handful of mixed nuts are nature's own vitamin pill. Just like fruit and vegetables, nuts such as almonds, Brazil nuts, cashews, chestnuts, hazelnuts, macadamias, pecans, pine nuts, pistachios and walnuts are packed with vitamins, minerals, antioxidants and phytochemicals beneficial to health. Enjoying a handful of nuts (30g) regularly as part of a healthy diet may reduce your risk of heart disease and type-2 diabetes, and can help with weight management.<sup>1-5</sup> So increase your food variety score by eating two serves of fruit, five serves of veggies and a handful of crunchy mixed nuts every day. A 30g serve of mixed nuts is equivalent to a handful of nuts. Have you had yours today?



## Nutrition and health benefits of mixed nuts

All tree nuts share similar health benefits – they're a good source of healthy fats, dietary fibre and contain a range of phytochemicals, vitamins and minerals. Mixed nuts however, are the perfect choice to take advantage of the specific nutritional benefits of each individual nut. Here's why:

- **Rich source of healthy fats** – nuts contain healthy monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats, and a low

## Nutrient content of natural mixed nuts<sup>6</sup>

Nutrient	Per 100g
Energy (kJ)	2754
Protein (g)	14.6
Arginine (g)	2.0
Fat, total (g)	63.3
Fat, saturated (g)	6.5
Fat, monounsaturated (g)	33.2
Fat, polyunsaturated (g)	21.2
Omega-3s (as ALA, mg)	791
Plant sterols (mg)	155
Carbohydrate, total (g)	6.2
Carbohydrate, sugars (g)	4.2
Dietary fibre (g)	7.7
Sodium (mg)	4.3
Potassium (mg)	603
Magnesium (mg)	193
Calcium (mg)	94
Iron (mg)	3.4
Zinc (mg)	3.4
Selenium (ug)	218
Manganese (mg)	3.2
Copper (mg)	1.3
Thiamin (mg)	0.6
Vitamin E (mg)	8.4

proportion of saturated fat.<sup>6</sup> Like all other plant foods, they are free of dietary cholesterol. Some nuts (particularly walnuts but also pecans, hazelnuts and macadamias) contain plant omega-3 fats in the form of alpha-linolenic acid (ALA), which can help to reduce inflammation.<sup>7</sup>

- **Excellent source of natural vitamin E** – mixed nuts are high in vitamin E with a 30g serve providing over 70% of the recommended intake.<sup>6</sup> Vitamin E is an important fat-soluble vitamin and antioxidant which can help maintain a healthy heart.<sup>8</sup> Natural vitamin E in foods has been shown to be more effective than vitamin E in supplements.<sup>9</sup>
- **A source of plant protein, particularly arginine** – mixed nuts contain around 4g of protein in every 30g handful.<sup>6</sup> Arginine is an amino acid that is converted to nitric oxide in the body. Nitric oxide causes blood vessels to dilate and remain elastic, and is involved in preventing blood clotting. Hardening of the arteries and blood clotting can lead to heart disease.<sup>10</sup>
- **Natural source of plant sterols<sup>6</sup>** – mixed nuts contain around 155mg plant sterols per 100g.<sup>6</sup> About 2–3g of plant sterols per day may help to lower blood cholesterol levels by around 10% by reducing cholesterol re-absorption in the intestine.<sup>11</sup>
- **Rich source of antioxidants and phytochemicals** – these protective plant compounds such as flavonoids, ellagic acid and resveratrol may help protect against chronic disease. The content of specific antioxidants and phytochemicals varies from one type

of nut to another, supporting the advantage of eating mixed nuts to combine the benefits of each different nut.<sup>12, 13</sup> Nuts in general have a high antioxidant capacity.<sup>14</sup>

- **Lowers blood cholesterol** – a major analysis comparing 25 nut and cholesterol lowering studies found that on average 67g of nuts/day lowered total cholesterol by ~5%, bad LDL cholesterol by ~7%. and triglycerides by ~10%.<sup>15</sup>
- **Keeps blood vessels healthy** – a traditional Mediterranean diet (TMD) including 30g of nuts each day has been shown to improve blood fats and reduced LDL oxidation when compared to a low fat diet.<sup>16</sup> Oxidation of LDL cholesterol is a key step in atherosclerosis – the blocking and hardening of arteries.
- **Prevents high blood pressure** – a study of young adults who were followed for 15 years found that those who ate the most nuts reduced their risk of developing high blood pressure by 15%.<sup>17</sup>

*continued next page*

For further information on the nutritional benefits of nuts and recipes visit [www.nutsforlife.com.au](http://www.nutsforlife.com.au) and [www.nuthealth.org](http://www.nuthealth.org) or follow us @nutsforlife and like us [facebook.com/nuts4life](https://www.facebook.com/nuts4life)

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**Go Nuts for Life. Go Nuts for Health.**



# Mixed nuts

- **Reduces heart disease risk** – eating a handful of nuts most days can reduce the risk of heart disease by 30–50%.<sup>1–4</sup> It's thought that the combination of healthy fats, fibre, plant sterols, antioxidant vitamins and minerals and other phytochemicals act together to help lower cholesterol and reduce heart disease risk.

## Mixed nuts also:

- **Contain important vitamins and minerals** including magnesium, copper, selenium, potassium, iron and zinc.<sup>6</sup>
- **Have a glycemic index (GI) lowering effect** – while not high in carbohydrates, nuts have a GI-lowering effect. They reduce the overall GI of a meal containing carbohydrates.<sup>18–20</sup> A low-GI diet has been shown to reduce the risk of type-2 diabetes and help in its management.<sup>21</sup>
- **Help in maintaining a healthy weight** – a study of nearly 9,000 Mediterranean University graduates found that over a 28 month period those who ate nuts (a 50g portion) two or more times per week were 31% less likely to gain weight than those who never or almost never ate nuts.<sup>22</sup> Eating nuts satisfies hunger and reduces appetite, improves insulin sensitivity and enhances metabolic health.<sup>23</sup> For all these reasons, nuts are a positive addition to a healthy eating pattern for managing your weight.<sup>23</sup>
- **Show other effects** – some research suggests eating nuts reduces oxidative stress in the body,<sup>18, 24</sup> this may explain how regular nut consumption can reduce the risk of developing age related macular degeneration of the eye.<sup>25, 26</sup> Nuts may also help to protect against gall stones<sup>27</sup> and in diverticular disease,<sup>28</sup> but more research is needed in these areas.

## Buying and storage tips

When choosing nuts, look for crisp, plump kernels. If buying nuts in the shell, select clean nuts free from cracks and holes. To keep nuts in the best condition, store them in an airtight container in the refrigerator or freezer. Nuts can be refrigerated for up to 4 months and frozen for up to 6 months. Bring nuts back to room temperature before serving.

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