

Nutrition Newsletter: Summer 2015

The Heart Healthy Benefits of Adding Nuts to Your Daily Diet

Nuts, excluding peanuts which are actually a legume, are one of the most beneficial foods to include in your daily diet. Sadly, most people avoid nuts due to their higher caloric value and fat content but one should remember the fat contained in nuts is actually cardio-protective. Nuts contain both monounsaturated fatty acids (MUFA) and polyunsaturated fatty acids (PUFA) which can both act to reduce inflammation and help protect your body from heart disease. Read below as we highlight a few of the most popular nuts and their specific benefits on our overall health.



Almonds: Probably the best known and most popular of the nuts, almonds have been shown to improve satiety and support reduced blood glucose levels in diabetic patients. Due to the high content of pre-biotic fiber they contain, almonds also help support satiety and promote the growth of healthy gut bacteria in our large intestine.
105 calories/ounce (24 nuts) with 8.8 grams MUFA vs. 3.4 grams PUFA vs. 1 gram saturated fat (SFA)



Cashews: Cashews, while lower in total fat, are actually higher in carbohydrates than any of the other nuts, but still have some positive health benefits including containing monounsaturated fatty acids which helps in reducing triglyceride levels. Cashews are also an excellent source of the minerals copper, phosphorus and magnesium.
157 calories/ounce (18 nuts) with 6.7 grams MUFA vs. 2.2 grams PUFA vs. 2.2 grams SFA



Pistachios: Made famous by the recent Steven Colbert TV commercials, pistachios are extremely beneficial for improving markers of metabolic syndrome and also, when added to a higher carbohydrate meal, can reduce the spike in post-prandial blood glucose levels. Like Almonds pistachios also contain a pre-biotic fiber that keeps are gut flora healthy.
159 calories/ ounce with 5.8 grams MUFA vs. 3.8 grams PUFA vs. 1.6 grams SFA



Hazelnuts: Though you cannot count Nutella as your source of Hazelnut for the day, the actual hazelnut is very high in Vitamin E which is a potent antioxidant that assists with protecting our cell membranes. Hazelnuts can also assist with reducing LDL cholesterol (the “bad” cholesterol).
178 calories/ounce (12 nuts) with 12.9 grams MUFA vs. 2.2 grams PUFA vs. 1.3 grams SFA



Walnuts: Walnuts are very high in PUFAs and an excellent plant-based source of omega-3 fatty acids. Walnuts have been shown to promote decreases in non-HDL cholesterol and also helps protect the lining of our blood vessels from oxidative stress which can lead to plaque formation.
185 calories/ounce (14 halves) with 2.5 grams MUFA vs. 11 grams PUFA vs. 1.7 grams SFA

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Adapted from Dr. Luis Malinow “Understanding Nuts & Seeds”

Honey Nut Cinnamon Cacao Bars

Adapted from www.ourpaleolife.com Honey Nut Bar Recipe

Prep time 5 minutes

Cook time 20 minutes

Ingredients

- ✓ 1 cup Cashews
- ✓ ½ cup Almonds
- ✓ ½ cup Pecans
- ✓ ½ cup Unsweetened Shredded Coconut
- ✓ 1 tsp. Pure Vanilla Extract
- ✓ ½ tsp. Sea Salt
- ✓ ½ tsp. Ground Cinnamon
- ✓ ½ cup + 1 Tbsp. (total of 9 Tbsp.) Raw Honey
- ✓ ½ cup Cacao Nibs (chocolate chips might get too melty)



Instructions

- Preheat oven to 350F.
- Line an 8x8 baking pan with parchment paper, leaving flaps on all 4 sides. Roughly chop the almonds and cashews by hand, in a hand chopper, in a blender, or in a food processor. Pieces should be about ¼" at the largest.
- Combine all ingredients except honey in a large bowl and stir until combined.
- Pour in the honey and mix with a fork until everything is evenly coated.
- Spread mixture into the prepared baking dish, pressing down to pack it in and reach all edges and corners of the pan. I use coconut-oiled hands to do this.
- Bake in the preheated oven for 20 minutes.
- Remove to a wire rack.
- Use the parchment flaps to press the bars down and compact them before they cool all the way.
- After the bars have cooled about 30 minutes, lift the bars out of the pan by the parchment paper flaps and flip over onto a piece of parchment so the bottom is now the top.
- Reshape back into a square and press down a little if the flipping moved things around a little. Peel off the parchment paper.
- Allow to cool completely and cut into (16) 2" x 2" bars. Wrap individually for a quick snack. Eat within 1 week.

Read more at: <http://www.ourpaleolife.com/2013/09/honey-nut-bars/>