

Nuts and Diabetes



A FACTSHEET FOR CLIENTS AND PATIENTS

Research shows that nuts play an important role in preventing type 2 diabetes^[1], managing existing diabetes^[2], and preventing or reducing the progression of diabetes-related complications^[2].



Eating just one handful of nuts four times a week is associated with a 13% reduced risk of developing diabetes^[1], and nuts can improve blood glucose levels and lower HbA1c for those with type 2 diabetes^[2].

How many nuts do I need to eat?

At least 30g, or about one handful, of nuts four times a week reduces the risk of developing diabetes^[1]. 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^[3].

Which nuts are best?

All nuts help prevent or manage diabetes, 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 diabetes?

- While nuts are not low GI (they don't have enough carbohydrate), **they have a GI lowering effect**, meaning that they reduce the overall GI of a meal^[4].
- Nuts contain mainly healthy unsaturated fats (mono- and polyunsaturated fats), and are low in saturated fats. Replacing saturated and trans fats with unsaturated fats **improves insulin sensitivity and reduces type 2 diabetes risk**^[5].
- Nuts are a good source of fibre. Diets high in fibre have been shown to help **manage diabetes and metabolic syndrome**, and can reduce the risk of developing diabetes^[6, 7].
- Most nuts are a rich source of magnesium, which can **reduce the risk of developing type 2 diabetes**. Magnesium also **improves fasting blood glucose and blood lipid** levels in people with diabetes^[8].

What does all this mean?

Regularly eating nuts can reduce the risk of developing diabetes, as well as help to manage existing diabetes and diabetes-related complications.

A daily nut habit can also reduce the risk of developing heart disease and help to maintain a healthy weight.



To put it simply, eating nuts is good for both preventing and managing diabetes.

DID YOU KNOW?

People with diabetes are more than twice as likely to die from cardiovascular disease and are more likely to have abnormal blood lipids including high cholesterol and triglycerides and lower 'good' HDL cholesterol^[9]. Carrying extra weight is also a major risk factor for developing type 2 diabetes, and can make managing diabetes more difficult.

So, how can nuts help?

Evidence shows that eating nuts regularly can reduce your risk of developing heart disease and can improve cholesterol levels^[10, 11]. Nuts are also associated with reducing the risk of overweight/obesity, as well as decreasing body weight, BMI and waist circumference^[3].

Ideas for adding nuts to your diet

- Add nuts to your morning cereal or breakfast smoothie.
- Toss a handful nuts to the pan when cooking stir-fries for a delicious, toasted crunch.
- Use pure nut butters as a spread for sandwiches.
- Dip sliced banana, apples, dates, celery or carrot into pure nut butter for healthy, tasty snacks.



References

1. Afshin, A., et al., Consumption of nuts and legumes and risk of incident ischemic heart disease, stroke, and diabetes: a systematic review and meta-analysis. *Am J Clin Nutr*, 2014. **100**(1): p. 278-88.
2. Vigliouk, E., et al., Effect of tree nuts on glycemic control in diabetes: a systematic review and meta-analysis of randomized controlled dietary trials. *PLoS One*, 2014. **9**(7): p. e103376.
3. Li, H., et al., Nut consumption and risk of metabolic syndrome and overweight/obesity: a meta-analysis of prospective cohort studies and randomized trials. *Nutr Metab (Lond)*, 2018. **15**: p. 46.
4. Kendall, C.W., et al., The glycemic effect of nut-enriched meals in healthy and diabetic subjects. *Nutr Metab Cardiovasc Dis*, 2011. **21 Suppl 1**: p. S34-9.
5. Riserus, U., W.C. Willett, and F.B. Hu, Dietary fats and prevention of type 2 diabetes. *Prog Lipid Res*, 2009. **48**(1): p. 44-51.
6. Salmeron, J., et al., Dietary fiber, glycemic load, and risk of NIDDM in men. *Diabetes Care*, 1997. **20**(4): p. 545-50.
7. Salmeron, J., et al., Dietary fiber, glycemic load, and risk of non-insulin-dependent diabetes mellitus in women. *Jama*, 1997. **277**(6): p. 472-7.
8. Dong, J.Y., et al., Magnesium intake and risk of type 2 diabetes: meta-analysis of prospective cohort studies. *Diabetes Care*, 2011. **34**(9): p. 2116-22.
9. Barr, E.L., et al., Risk of cardiovascular and all-cause mortality in individuals with diabetes mellitus, impaired fasting glucose, and impaired glucose tolerance: the Australian Diabetes, Obesity, and Lifestyle Study (AusDiab). *Circulation*, 2007. **116**(2): p. 151-7.
10. Aune, D., et al., Nut consumption and risk of cardiovascular disease, total cancer, all-cause and cause-specific mortality: a systematic review and dose-response meta-analysis of prospective studies. *BMC Med*, 2016. **14**(1): p. 207.
11. Neale, E., et al., *The effect of nut consumption on heart health: an updated systematic review of the literature*. 2018. Nuts for Life, unpublished.

For further information on nuts and health refer to www.nutsforlife.com.au or follow us on social media
 Facebook/nuts4life
 Twitter @NutsForLife
 Instagram @nuts_for_life
 For information purposes only. ©2019 Nuts for Life

Go Nuts for Life
 Go Nuts for Health

