LIVE EAT PLAY Colorado

Nuts and Seeds

Did You Know?

In 2003, the FDA approved the health claim: "scientific evidence suggests but does not prove that eating 1.5 ounces per day of most nuts, as part of a diet low in saturated fat and cholesterol, may reduce the risk of heart disease".

Nuts included in this claim are walnuts, peanuts, pecans, hazelnuts, almonds, and pistachios.

Nuts and seeds are a great source of heart-healthy unsaturated fats, including Omega 3 fatty acids. They are also high in protein, fiber, folate, magnesium, antioxidants like vitamin E and selenium, and phytochemicals. However, both nuts and seeds can be very high in calories, so a little goes a long way! A good goal is to *replace* a different source of fat in your diet, and keep your portions of nuts and seeds reasonable.

How should I buy and store them?

The best nuts and seeds to buy are either raw or dry roasted. Avoid those that are heavily salted, honey roasted, flavored, or roasted in oil. Sometimes buying nuts in their shells can help with portion control since it takes time to shell them.

Because of the high fat content, nuts and seeds have a tendency to go rancid. Shelf life depends on the type of nut/seed, and amount of exposure to light, heat, and moisture. The best way to store them is in an airtight container in the freezer.

Easy ways to add nuts and seeds to your diet

- Measure out 1ounce of nuts into individual bags or containers for quick snacks.
- Sprinkle nuts or seeds on your cereal, yogurt, fruit, vegetables, salads, or pasta dishes.
- Add nuts or seeds to the batter when making muffins, pancakes, cookies, cakes, breads, and brownies.
- Add nut or seed butters to your toast or apples. Natural peanut butter is a good option, as are almond, soy, or sunflower butter.

How much is an ounce?

- 45-47 pistachios
- 28-30 peanuts
- 20-24 almonds
- 18-20 pecan halves or hazelnuts
- 14 walnut halves
- About ½ cup pumpkin seeds
- About ¼ cup shelled sunflower seeds

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