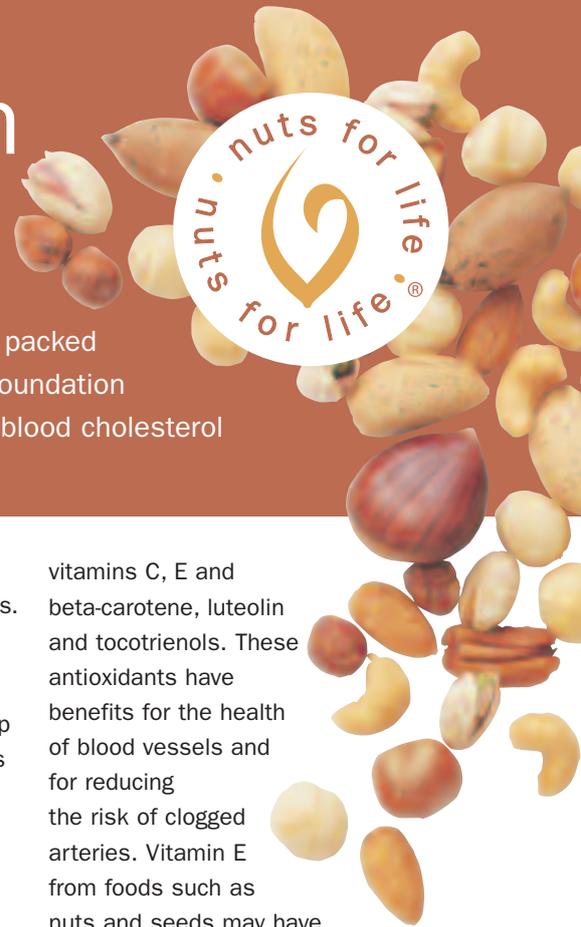


Nuts and heart health

How do you halve your risk of developing heart disease?

The answer is by eating a handful of nuts (30g) five or more times a week! Tree nuts such as **almonds, Brazil nuts, cashews, chestnuts, hazelnuts, macadamias, pecans, pine nuts, pistachios** and **walnuts** are packed full of beneficial substances for good heart health. The National Heart Foundation recommends snacking on plain, unsalted nuts as one way to help lower blood cholesterol levels and maintain a healthy heart.



Eat nuts regularly

Studies show enjoying nuts 5–7 times a week can halve your risk of developing heart disease. Even those who eat nuts once a week have less heart disease than those who don't eat any nuts. It seems frequent nut consumption is associated with lower levels of inflammatory markers, which may partially explain the lower risk of heart disease and diabetes.

Why nuts are so heart healthy

Nuts contain a variety of natural substances that contribute to lowering the risk of heart disease.

1. Healthy fats

Nuts are a great source of healthy fats. Healthy fats are monounsaturated or polyunsaturated fats which can help lower blood cholesterol levels.

Nuts high in monounsaturated fat include macadamias, cashews, almonds, pistachios, and pecans.

Nuts high in polyunsaturated fat include walnuts, hazelnuts, pine nuts and Brazil nuts.

Omega-3 is a type of polyunsaturated fat and is found in pecans, walnuts and hazelnuts. Eating a variety of nuts will help provide the right of balance of healthy fats in your daily eating plan.

2. Plant sterols

Tree nuts contain plant sterols. These are substances that can reduce cholesterol absorption from the gut. Pistachios, cashews, almonds and pecans provide plant sterols.

3. Cholesterol free

Because nuts are a plant food, they are naturally cholesterol free! Nuts also contain less saturated fat than many other snack foods. This is good news for people who already have high cholesterol levels and need to monitor their intake.

4. Antioxidants

Nuts contain a variety of antioxidants including flavonoids, phenolic compounds,

vitamins C, E and beta-carotene, luteolin and tocotrienols. These antioxidants have benefits for the health of blood vessels and for reducing the risk of clogged arteries. Vitamin E from foods such as nuts and seeds may have particular benefits as it has been associated with a reduced risk of death from heart disease.

5. Arginine

Nuts contain arginine, an amino acid that helps keep blood flowing smoothly through the blood vessels. It can slow the formation of blood clots and reduce the clogging of arteries.

6. Folate

Folate is a B vitamin that helps reduce high levels of an amino acid called homocysteine, which is a risk factor for heart disease. Cashews, chestnuts, hazelnuts, pine nuts, pistachios and walnuts provide useful amounts of folate.

7. Fibre

All nuts contribute fibre to the diet and eating foods rich in fibre, especially soluble fibre, helps reduce the level of cholesterol in the blood stream.

For further information on nuts and health refer to

www.nutsforlife.com.au
or phone **02 8295 2300**

Nuts for Life is an initiative of the Australian Tree Nut Industry

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Tips for including nuts daily

To obtain maximum heart health benefits from nuts, enjoy them five or more times a week. Try the following to include a variety of nuts in your heart healthy eating plan!

- Mix unsalted nuts with dried fruit for a healthy snack
- Sprinkle cashews or dry roasted almonds through an Asian stir fry or curry
- Crush hazelnuts or Brazil nuts and mix with breadcrumbs and your favourite herbs to make a crunchy topping for fish or chicken
- Puree hazelnuts or macadamias as an alternative to peanut butter
- Roast macadamias or pine nuts and toss them through a salad
- Include pecans and walnuts in home made muffins
- Add chopped pistachios to your favourite pasta sauce
- Crush almonds over fresh fruit and yoghurt
- Roast chestnuts for a delicious after dinner treat



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