

Go Nuts! Camerota's Cupboard November 2012

Although nuts are high in fat and calories, they are rich in numerous substances that are beneficial to your health, so they pack a powerful nutritional punch. Before reading this month's recipes take this **quiz** from Johns Hopkins (Posted in *Nutrition and Weight Control* on August 8, 2012) to learn why nuts are good for you.

What's an appropriate serving size of nuts?

- A. 1 ounce
- B. 2 ounces
- C. 3 ounces

Answer: A. Although they are considered a healthy snack, nuts are not a low-calorie food. Different nuts have varying calorie counts, but most contain between 160 and 200 calories per ounce (more, of course, if they're covered in sugar or chocolate).

You should limit your daily consumption to about 1 ounce; use the following as a guide: 35 peanuts; 24 almonds; 18 medium cashews; or 12 filberts, hazelnuts, macadamia nuts or walnut halves. Remember that salted nuts can have too much sodium to be healthy, so seek out unsalted nuts whenever possible.

What kind of fat is found in nuts?

- A. Monounsaturated fats
- B. Polyunsaturated fats
- C. Omega-3 fatty acids
- D. All of the above

Answer: D. Too often, the sources of protein that we choose -- such as meat and dairy products -- contain saturated fats, which are bad for the heart. But nuts offer protein that's accompanied by healthier forms of fat. Monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats are known to lower levels of low-density lipoprotein (LDL, or "bad") cholesterol.

Nuts are also one of the best plant-based sources of omega-3 fatty acids, a type of polyunsaturated fat that lowers the risk of

arrhythmias (abnormal heartbeat), triglyceride levels and blood pressure, and may also slow the rate of plaque growth in the arteries.

Which of the following nuts is highest in fat and calories per serving?

- A. Cashews
- B. Macadamia nuts
- C. Walnuts

Answer: B. Macadamia nuts have 204 calories per ounce and 21.5 grams of fat (17 grams of unsaturated fat) per ounce. Chestnuts are lowest in calories and fat, with 69 calories and less than 1 gram of fat per ounce. Other common nuts (including almonds, cashews, peanuts, pecans, pistachios and walnuts) range from 161 to 201 calories per ounce.

Watercress and Pistachio Salad

(Adapted from The New York Times which adapted it from “Plenty” by Yotam Ottolenghi)

Pistachios can help support cardiovascular health because they contain an abundance of phytosterols which compete with cholesterol from the diet for absorption. Try this salad at your Thanksgiving dinner.

4 tablespoons olive oil

1 tablespoon lemon juice, more to taste

1 teaspoon orange juice

Salt and black pepper to taste

3½ cups watercress, thick stalks removed

1 scant cup of fresh basil leaves

1½ cups cilantro leaves

¼ cup dill

¼ cup tarragon leaves

1/3 cup shelled unsalted pistachios, light toasted and coarsely crushed.

- In a small bowl, whisk together the olive oil, lemon juice, orange juice and salt and pepper.
- In a large bowl, place watercress and herbs. Set aside until you are ready to serve the salad; you can leave greens in the refrigerator in an airtight container for a few hours. Just before serving, pour dressing and pistachios over the leaves and toss gently.

Yield: 4 servings

Banana-Nut Raisin Bread

(from The Nutrition Council of Greater Cincinnati's *More Nutritious Still Delicious*)

According to W. Elaine Hardman, Ph.D., a researcher at Marshall University's Joan C. Edwards School of Medicine, "Walnut compounds that could slow the development of breast cancer include omega-3 fatty acids, antioxidants and other chemicals from plants called phytochemicals, which all work together to slow the growth of cancer." The canola oil and walnut provide heart-healthy fat.

1 cup all purpose flour
 3/4 cup whole wheat flour
 1/2 cup granulated sugar
 1 tablespoon baking powder
 1/4 teaspoon salt
 1/3 cup chopped walnuts
 1/3 cup canola oil
 1/2 cup raisins
 2 tablespoons orange juice
 2 medium bananas, mashed (about 1 cup)

- Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Spray a 9x5 inch loaf pan with cooking spray, lightly flour.
- In a medium bowl, combine all ingredients, except banana. Mix well.

- Add mashed banana; stir or mix until blended.
- Pour into prepared loaf pan. Bake in 350 degree oven for 40 minutes.

Yield: 1 loaf (18 slices)

Nutrition information per serving (1 slice): 150 calories; 3g protein; 22g carbohydrate; 2g dietary fiber; 6g fat; <1g saturated fat; 24mg cholesterol; 134mg sodium

Rosemary Roasted Almonds

(from *Cooking Light*)

Fresh rosemary gives wonderful fragrance and flavor to this roasted almond recipe, and chili powder provides just the right amount of spiciness. Almonds are high in monounsaturated fats, the same type of health-promoting fats as are found in olive oil, which have been associated with reduced risk of heart disease. Serve to party guests, family waiting for the Thanksgiving turkey, or as an everyday snack.

- 1 tablespoon finely chopped fresh rosemary
- 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 teaspoon chile powder
- 3/4 teaspoon kosher salt
- Dash of ground red pepper
- 1 (10-ounce) bag whole almonds (about 2 cups)

- Preheat oven to 325°.
- Combine all ingredients in a medium bowl; toss to coat. Arrange nut mixture in a single layer on a baking sheet lined with foil. Bake at 325° for 20 minutes or until lightly toasted. Cool to room temperature.

Yield: 2 cups (serving size: about 2 tablespoons)