

PROTEIN-PACKED PEANUTS



One ounce of peanuts—about a handful—contains 7 grams of protein.

That's more than other nuts and for good reason: Botanically speaking, peanuts are legumes rather than true nuts, so their protein content is comparable to many beans.

Source: USDA Food Composition Databases, based on dry-roasted nuts.

Protein Content of Nuts	Grams of protein per 1 ounce of nuts
Peanuts	7 grams
Pistachios	6 grams
Almonds	6 grams
Cashews	4 grams
Hazelnuts	4 grams
Walnuts	4 grams
Pecans	3 grams
Macadamias	2 grams

The Whole Package

Some protein foods are healthier choices than others, thanks in part to the fats and carbohydrates that come packaged with the protein. Peanuts are a standout choice for several reasons:



Science! The Peanut's Composition:

- The protein is plant-based.
- Most of peanuts' fat is unsaturated.
- Much of the peanut's carbohydrate is fiber.



Health! The Peanut Positives

- Peanuts contain a long list of vitamins and minerals.
- Peanuts have a rich assortment of bioactive compounds, including resveratrol, plant sterols, flavonoids, and antioxidants.

You can't beat that package deal. Growing evidence suggests that eating sensible amounts of peanuts as part of a diet low in saturated fat and cholesterol may have health benefits.



Research! The Peanut's Bona Fides:

The study: Researchers from the Harvard School of Public Health tracked the long-term health of more than 200,000 Americans.

The findings: It turns out that substituting one daily serving of a plant protein (such as peanuts or peanut butter) for one serving of an animal protein decreased the risk of developing type 2 diabetes. Specifically, subbing a plant protein for red meat and processed meat reduced the diabetes risk by 11 to 21 percent.

How Peanuts Measure Up

Peanuts pack a lot of protein power into every bite. In the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, recommended amounts of protein are given in ounce-equivalents, oz-eq.

An oz-eq of pork is the same as an ounce by weight. But an oz-eq of peanuts is less than an ounce by weight because they're such a concentrated source of nutrition.

Daily protein recommendation (based on 2,000 calories per day)	
American-style diet	5.5 oz-eq
Mediterranean-style diet	6.5 oz-eq
Vegetarian diet	3.5 oz-eq



1 OUNCE-EQUIVALENT OF PROTEIN

=



½ OUNCE OF PEANUTS

=



1 TABLESPOON OF PEANUT BUTTER

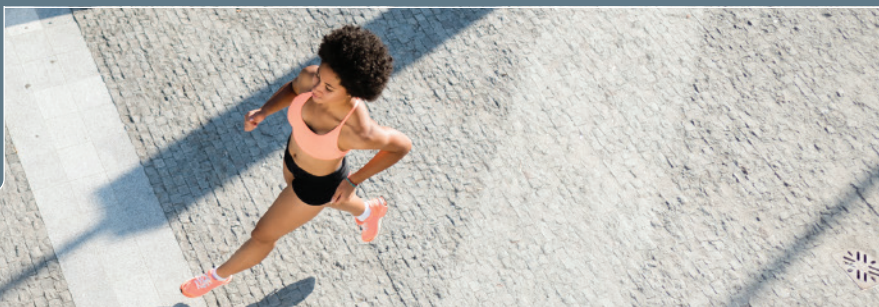


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Why Protein Matters

It's important to consume protein every day, because the body doesn't store it the way it does fats and carbohydrates. Dietary protein is used by the body to build and maintain:

- Bones
- Muscles
- Cartilage
- Skin
- Blood
- Enzymes
- Hormones



Peanut Protein Is Smart for Your Heart

It's well known that the monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats in peanuts may promote cardiovascular health. But could the protein in peanuts be heart-healthy as well? That's the question asked by researchers at Pennsylvania State University in a recent study.



The study: The researchers knew that, after a high-fat meal, blood fat levels tend to shoot up. This causes blood vessels to stiffen, which makes it more difficult for the heart to pump blood. Over time, this increases the risk for heart disease and stroke.

The method: Study participants were asked to drink a high-fat shake made either with or without peanuts. The fat content of the shakes was kept the same to isolate the effects of peanut protein and bioactive compounds. Afterward, the participants' blood vessel flexibility was measured using ultrasound.

The findings: Among those who got the peanut shake, blood vessels stayed more open and flexible. What's the connection? The researchers noted that peanuts contain high levels of arginine, which is an amino acid—one of the building blocks of protein. Arginine is a precursor to nitric oxide, a gas that helps keep blood vessels wide open and decrease blood pressure.

Protein-Boosting Ideas



- Toss peanuts into a stir-fries, salads, and coleslaw.
- Stir peanut butter into chili in place of ground beef.
- Blend peanut powder into your breakfast smoothie.
- For more suggestions, go to www.peanut-institute.com/recipes.



References

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