



## 5 Delicious Ways to Enjoy the Benefits of Nuts and Seeds

Nuts and seeds are powerhouses of both nutrition and taste. Packed safely in their own natural shells, nuts and seeds are nutrient-rich because they contain everything that a new plant needs to grow: energy, protein, vitamins, minerals, and 'good' fats, such as heart-healthy omega-3 and monounsaturated fatty acids.

### 1. Vary the types of nuts and seeds.

Nuts and seeds are not all created equal. By varying the types of nuts and seeds you eat, you will get different vitamins (especially B-vitamins, E, and K) and minerals (including copper, iron, selenium, and zinc), as well as important disease-fighting antioxidants (like zeaxanthin which helps prevent age-related macular degeneration).

### 2. Snack on a handful of nuts or seeds.

Since nuts and seeds are calorie-dense as well as nutrient-rich, it's smart to consider portion size. One ounce - a small handful - is generally considered to be a serving with 160 to 200 calories. To create personal sized snacks, divide a container of shelled nuts or seeds into small plastic bags with a handful (10-24 nuts depending on type) in each.

### 3. Sprinkle nuts and seeds into meals.

Nuts and seeds are more than healthful snacks. A sprinkling of either one adds flavor and nutrients to any meal. Consider adding a sprinkling of almonds to a morning bowl of oatmeal, sunflowers seeds to a lunchtime spinach salad, or walnuts to a pasta dish for dinner. Nuts and seeds can also be sprinkled on yogurt, veggies, and desserts.

### 4. Spread on a bit of nut or seed butter.

Peanut butter, the most common 'nut' butter, is not actually made with nuts. Peanuts are legumes, like dried beans. Cashew, almond, and sun butters are widely available and may be good substitutes for those with peanut allergies. *Nutella*® is a popular European spread made with hazelnuts, while tahini is made from sesame seeds.

### 5. Bake with nuts and seeds.

Nuts and seeds are perfect for pumping up the nutritional value of pancakes, waffles, breads, rolls, and muffins, as well as cookies and bars. Almost any nuts or seeds can be chopped and added to your favorite baked recipe. Flax seeds - a very rich source of omega-3 fatty acids - can be ground and successfully added to many baked items.