CRACKING OPEN THE NUTRITION STORY OF OUR AMERICA'S NATIVE NUT

You think of them for pie. You adore them in pralines. But did you know pecans, America's native nut, are actually an underrated nutritional powerhouse?

In fact, a handful of pecans – about 19 halves – is a good source of fiber, thiamin and zinc, and an excellent source of copper and manganese[1]. In addition to their buttery texture and naturally sweet flavor, pecans are versatile, satisfying, and pack a surprising amount of nutrition in a snackable serving size.

Let's take a closer look at what's inside America's native nut.

DELICIOUS KERNELS OF GOODNESS

Pecans are a complex whole food packed with multiple **health-promoting nutrients and bioactive compounds.**

PHYTONUTRIENTS
10 mg of flavonoids
36 mg of plant sterols

PLANT PROTEIN
3 grams of plant-based protein

UNSATURATED FAT
18 grams of monounsaturated fat, including oleic acid (only 2 grams of saturated fat)

Source: USDA National Nutrient Database for Standard Reference

DIETARY FIBER
Good source of dietary fiber, 11% DV

ANTIOXIDANT VITAMINS
8 mcg of beta carotene, or provitamin A
7 mg gamma-tocopherols, a form of vitamin E

MINERALS
A trio of essential minerals:
60% DV manganese,
40% DV copper and 10% DV zinc

Serving size = 1 ounce or about 19 halves
DV = % Daily Value

A HEART-SMART FOOD

Pecans are a heart-healthy food certified by the American Heart Association's® Heart-Check Program. Only foods that meet specific nutrition requirements for sodium, fats, and beneficial nutrients can receive the Heart-Check Certification.

Pecans are recognized as a heart-healthy food - scientific evidence suggests but does not prove that eating 1.5 ounces per day of most nuts, such as pecans, as a part of a diet low in saturated fat and cholesterol may reduce the risk of heart disease. A one-ounce serving of pecans contains 18g of unsaturated fat and only 2g of saturated fat.

In one study, researchers found eating about 2 servings of pecans a day over a 4-week period was associated with improved fasting total- and LDL-cholesterol levels[2].

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POLYPHENOLS IN PECANS

Pecans contain a mix of polyphenols, specifically flavonoids[1]. These bioactive compounds, particularly proanthocyanidins, anthocyanidins and flavan-3-ols, have been the focus of emerging research on cardiovascular health[3,4,5]. While these studies examined total flavonoid consumption and not pecans specifically, pecans do help contribute to America's flavonoid intake. Pecans contain 898 milligrams of proanthocyanidins, 18 milligrams of anthocyanidins and 16 milligrams of flavan-3-ols per 100 grams, including epicatechin and catechin[1].

GAMMA-TOCOPHEROLS	(mg per ounce)
Almonds	0.18
Brazil Nuts	2.71
Cashews	n/a
Hazelnuts	0
Macadamias	0
Pecans	6.93
Pine Nuts	3.16
Pistachios	6.64
Walnuts	5.91

All certified pecans must meet the American Heart Association's® nutrition requirements which include a limit of 140 mg or less of sodium per label serving size. The Heart-Check Food Certification does not apply to hyperlinks, recipes, or research unless expressly stated. For more information, see the American Heart Association's® nutrition guidelines at heartcheck-mark.org/guidelines. American Heart Association® and the Heart-Check Mark are registered trademarks of the American Heart Association®.

METABOLIC HEALTH

Research shows that pecans also supports metabolic health. One serving of pecans contains just 4 grams of carbohydrates, with 3 grams being dietary fiber. High dietary fiber intake offers many health benefits and may reduce the risk of developing coronary heart disease, stroke, hypertension, diabetes, obesity, and certain gastrointestinal diseases.[6]

One study on pecans found that a handful each day (about 1.5 ounces) helped improve certain markers of cardiometabolic disease.[7]After four weeks on the pecan-rich diet, participants experienced statistically significant changes in serum insulin, insulin resistance and pancreatic beta cell function compared to the control diet. Additionally, a 2023 review suggests higher nut consumption, including pecans, may have beneficial effects on diabetes prevention and management. In individuals with type 2 diabetes, long-term trials have indicated modest positive effects on blood glucose control.[8]

EMERGING RESEARCH IN COGNITIVE HEALTH

Pecans have vitamin E, which is an antioxidant. Antioxidants are found in food and can protect against cell damage[4]. A handful of pecans (about 19 halves) contain 0.4 milligrams of vitamin E, about 9% of your Daily Value, which may support brain function, especially in adults with mild memory and thinking changes[9].

Emerging evidence from human trials showing the inclusion of nuts and berries in the diet can provide a beneficial effect on memory, global cognition and depression, particularly among older adults[10].

IT'S TIME TO PICK PECANS

When it comes to America's native nut, great taste is just the beginning. Pecans should no longer be overlooked in health conversations. This nutrient-dense nut deserves attention – and not just during the holidays. Whether tossed in salads and grain bowls, blended in a smoothie, transformed into pecan butter, added to vegetables and main dishes, or eaten whole as a snack – American Pecans™ are a wholesome and homegrown nut that's ideal any time of the year. To learn more about American Pecans™, including recipes, health research, and how the country's native nut is grown and harvested, visit **eatpecans.com**

5 Ways to Enjoy Pecans

1. **Salad ingredient**
2. **Yogurt and oatmeal topping**
3. **Smoothies**
4. **Bread crumb replacement**
5. **Trail and snack mixes**

Or just by the handful!

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American Pecan Promotion Board, 2024

Visit: eatpecans.com

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