

Nutrition Action

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CENTER FOR SCIENCE IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST

RYE BYE BEEF?

LESS RED MEAT MAKES DIETS GREENER AND HEALTHIER

Heat attack, stroke, diabetes, colon cancer. People who eat more red meat—beef, pork, lamb, and veal—have a higher risk of each of those illnesses. And they're more likely to die during years-long studies than those who eat less red meat.

To make matters worse, producing red meat (especially beef) creates more greenhouse gas emissions, more water loss, and more pollution than any other single food.

Here's why eating less red meat—even for one day a week—can help you and the planet.

Continued on page 3.

MEMO FROM MFJ

Axing Additives: a Good Start



Something interesting is happening in the food industry. Panera, Subway, and Taco Bell have all promised to get rid of artificial ingredients including colorings and flavorings from some or all of their foods. Nestlé (at

least for its few chocolate candies) and Kraft (for its Mac & Cheese) have said the same.

I suppose the seeds for that development were planted 50 or 60 years ago, when companies began using a cornucopia of synthetic chemicals to color, flavor, preserve, and texturize their foods. Hello Cheez Whiz, Taco Flavored Doritos, and Trix cereal.

The labels of some foods have so many chemical names that you need a dictio-

to get rid of calcium propionate, which retards mold growth and adds some calcium to baked goods? Or why banish sodium erythorbate, which is perfectly innocuous and inhibits the formation of cancer-causing nitrosamines? And replacing high-fructose corn syrup with sugar—even if it's organic or non-GMO—won't improve anyone's health.

Moreover, some restaurants that boast about eliminating dyes and artificial sweeteners from their foods forget to mention that their soft drinks will still contain those additives (often at higher levels than other foods).

That said, I applaud companies for moving to eliminate unnecessary or potentially harmful additives. Next up: do something about the sky-high calories and sodium in many of their foods.

INGREDIENTS: BLANCHED MUSHROOM RAMIOLI (WATER, PASTA (DURUM FLOUR ENRICHED (DURUM FLOUR, WHEAT, FERROUS SULFATE, THIAMINE MONONITRATE, NIACIN, FOLIC ACID), WATER, EGGS), FILLING (RICOTTA CHEESE (PASTEURIZED WHEY, PASTEURIZED SKIM MILK, WHEAT, LANTHAN OXIDE, POTASSIUM PHOSPHATE), MUSHROOMS, CRAMON MUSHROOMS, MILK, BREAD CRUMBS (WHEAT FLOUR, DEXTROSE, YEAST, SALT), LIGHT CREAM, ONIONS, GARLIC, 2% OR LESS OF MANDARIN ORANGE CONCENTRATE, FONTINA CHEESE (PASTEURIZED MILK, CHEESE CULTURES, SALT, ENZYMES), PARMESAN CHEESE (PASTEURIZED PART SKIM MILK, CHEESE CULTURES, SALT, ENZYMES), SALT, BUTTER (CREAM, SALT), CANOLA OIL, RICE STARCH, WATER, SPICES, MODIFIED CORNSTARCH, WHEAT FLOUR, CARAMEL COLOR, CORNSTARCH, BROWN SUGAR, CARAMELIZED), SKIM MILK, RED PEPPERS, SPINACH, WATER, PARMESAN AND ASAGO CHEESE BLEND WITH FLAVOR (PARMESAN CHEESE (CULTURED MILK, SALT, ENZYMES), ASAGO CHEESE (CULTURED MILK, SALT, ENZYMES), ETHEME MODIFIED PARMESAN CHEESE (CULTURED MILK, WATER, SALT, ENZYMES), WHEY (SALT), 2% OR LESS OF SWEETENED CONDENSED MILK, MODIFIED CORNSTARCH, MARSALA WINE, MUSHROOM BASE, SHITAKE MUSHROOMS, SUGAR, SALT, CANOLA OIL, MALTODEXTRIN, ONION POWDER, 2% OR LESS OF POTATO STARCH, HYDROLYZED WHEAT GLUTEN, MUSHROOM JUICE CONCENTRATE, CARAMEL COLOR, NATURAL FLAVORS, GARLIC JUICE CONCENTRATE, ONION JUICE CONCENTRATE, SWEETENED CONDENSED MILK, LANTHAN OXIDE, MALTODEXTRIN, MODIFIED CORNSTARCH, FLAVORING, MUSHROOMS, SWEETENED CONDENSED MILK, WHEAT FLOUR, CARAMEL COLOR, CITRIC ACID, (L)ASCORBIC ACID, BUTTER (CREAM, SALT, CAROL PRIME, SEA SALT, YEAST EXTRACT, FERMENTED ONIONS, POTASSIUM CHLORIDE, CARAMEL COLOR, NATURAL FLAVORS, SEASONING (MALTODEXTRIN, FLAVOR, ETHEME MODIFIED BUTTERFAT), SPICES, LACTIC ACID BLEND (LACTIC ACID, CALCIUM LACTATE). CONTAINS: MILK, EGG, WHEAT INGREDIENTS. DISTRIBUTED BY: NESTLÉ USA, INC., SOLON, OH 44139 USA

What's in Lean Cuisine's Mushroom Mezzaluna Ravioli? Good luck! (Label shown actual size.)

nary to decipher them—that is, after you find a magnifying glass to see the squished-together fine print (see above).

But lately, people have begun to ridicule additive-packed foods, especially online. And some companies have discovered that dropping additives gives them something to brag about.

I'm delighted to see food companies get rid of the likes of polysorbate 80, disodium inosinate, and polyglycerol polyricinoleate (PGPR), which are just chemical props for packaged foods that are typically high in salt or sugar. And I'm all in favor of eliminating additives, like aspartame and food dyes, that pose a bona fide health risk.

But in the rush to purify, companies needn't jettison compounds that are safe and useful.

Why, for example, does Panera need

Pizza Hut's foods may soon have no artificial flavors, but its Meat Lover's Personal Pan Pizza will still pack 860 calories, 18 grams of saturated fat, and 2,150 mg of sodium. And Taco Bell's nacho cheese sauce may soon be free of Yellow 6 dye, but the chain's XXL Grilled Stuffed Beef Burrito will still harbor 860 calories, 14 grams of sat fat, and 2,200 mg of sodium.

Getting rid of additives that are worthless—or worse—is great. Now how about giving consumers' waistlines and hearts a little TLC?

Michael F. Jacobson, Ph.D.
President
Center for Science in the Public Interest

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BYE BYE BEEF?

LESS RED MEAT MAKES DIETS GREENER AND HEALTHIER



Walter Willett chairs the Department of Nutrition and is the Fredrick John Stare professor of epidemiology and nutrition at the Harvard T.H.

Chan School of Public Health. The author of more than 1,600 scientific articles, he is one of the most cited researchers in clinical medicine. Willett has received numerous awards including the American Cancer Society's Medal of Honor. His books include *Eat, Drink, and Be Healthy* and *Eat, Drink, and Weigh Less*. He spoke to *Nutrition Action's* Bonnie Liebman.

Q: Are people who eat more red meat more likely to die prematurely?

A: Yes. Red meat consumption is related to total mortality rates both in our studies here at Harvard and in the AARP study conducted by the National Institutes of Health. [See "Meaty Risks."]

And when we looked at the incidence of major chronic diseases, red meat was related to a higher risk of cardiovascular disease, including both heart disease and stroke, as well as to type 2 diabetes and some cancers.

Q: How many deaths could be prevented if people ate less red meat?

A: We estimated that 8 to 9 percent of the deaths in our study could have been saved if people ate less than half a serving of red meat per day. That works out to over 100,000 premature deaths per year nationwide. Tobacco takes up about 30 percent of deaths, and lack of activity accounts for a big chunk. Trans

fats, lack of fruits and vegetables, and other aspects of the diet contribute, too. So that's a pretty substantial risk coming from one food.

Q: Which cancers are linked to red meat?

A: The evidence is strongest for colorectal cancer, and there the association is strongest with processed red meats like bacon, sausage, hot dogs, and lunch meats. We've also seen that red meat consumption during adolescence is related to the risk of breast cancer.

Q: In both pre- and postmenopausal women?

A: In initial reports, the increase in breast cancer has been mainly in premenopausal

women. We're just starting to get enough data to look at postmenopausal women separately. But it's interesting that red meat consumption during adolescence and early adult life is more strongly related to breast cancer risk than red meat consumption in midlife or later, where we haven't seen much of a relationship.

Q: What could explain that?

A: For breast cancer, many factors seem to be operating most strongly early in life. It was clearest with ionizing radiation. Japanese women who were exposed to radiation in the bombings of Nagasaki and Hiroshima after age 40 had virtually no increased breast cancer risk. But if they were exposed to the radiation when they were children or young adults, there was quite an increase in breast

cancer risk decades later. So it seems that younger, less differentiated breast tissue is more vulnerable.

Q: Why might processed meats pose a risk to the colon?

A: It's not clear, but processed meats have preservatives like nitrites, and nitrosamines are formed in some. They are carcinogenic in animal studies.

Q: Does cooking also create carcinogens in fresh meat?

A: Yes. Heterocyclic amines are formed when proteins are heated at high temperatures, especially when meat starts to char and burn a bit. They're also carcinogenic in animals.

It's been difficult to disentangle all of the potential carcinogens in red meat. For most things that are bad for us, it's usually due not to a single factor,

>>>>>

Meaty Risks



The risk of dying during a 28-year study was roughly 37 percent higher in men who ate about 2 servings of red meat a day than in those who ate about 2 servings a week. The increase in risk was similar in women.

Source: *Arch. Intern. Med.* 172: 555, 2012.

but to a combination of factors that together cause the greatest adverse health outcomes.

Q: Is eating less red meat the best way to prevent cancer?

A: Not smoking is the most important thing you can do. Avoiding overweight or obesity has emerged as the second most important. That wasn't on the radar screen 25 years ago.

Red meat is less important, but when we talk about its impact on cancer risk, that's after statistically removing its effect on weight. There's evidence that red meat contributes to being overweight. So red meat would have a greater impact if we counted its contribution to overweight and obesity.

Q: Are we eating less red meat than we used to?

A: Yes. Meat consumption has been stable over the last decade or so, but if you look back 30 or 40 years, we've cut down quite a bit. And that's been an important contribution to the reduction in cardiovascular disease. Poultry's going up, which is a good switch both from environmental and health standpoints.

Q: Do all studies find a link between red meat and the risk of heart disease or stroke?

A: No. It's all about what you compare meat to. That's critical when you look at something that occupies a large part of the diet, like red meat does for many people.

If you compare red meat to the rest of the typical American diet, which is mainly refined starch and sugar and potatoes, you're essentially comparing unhealthy foods to unhealthy foods.



Q: So people who eat more red meat might have the same risk of heart attack or stroke as those who eat more white bread, rice, potatoes, sweets, and soda?

A: Right. But if you compare red meat to alternative protein sources, like poultry, fish, nuts, beans, or low-fat dairy, then red meat is consistently linked to a higher risk of mortality or cardiovascular disease or diabetes.

Q: Why?

A: Part of it is the relatively high levels of saturated fat in red meat. Those alternative protein sources have more unsaturated fat, and polyunsaturated fats in particular. Even poultry has more polyunsaturated fat than beef.



Serve lentils with vegetables, in soup, or in Indian dal. Target, Trader Joe's, and others now sell vacuum-packed cooked lentils.

And there's recent evidence that the choline and carnitine in red meat are metabolized in the blood and in the GI tract to TMAO, which appears to cause a buildup of plaque in arteries. And the cholesterol and heme iron in red meat are probably also factors.

Q: Heme iron is the iron in meat and poultry, not plants?

A: Yes, and it's often been held up as a virtue by nutritionists, because it's better absorbed than non-heme iron. But it's really a form of iron with unregulated absorption, and that's not

necessarily good.

If we already have enough iron in our bodies, like 80 or 90 percent of Americans, we continue to absorb heme iron whether we need it or not.

Q: And that could be harmful?

A: Yes. In contrast, non-heme iron—which we get from vegetables, beans, nuts, whole grains, or supplements—is quite regulated.

If we're short on iron, we absorb it well. But if we have adequate stores, then we essentially shut down our absorption.

That's good because iron is a pro-oxidant that can damage cells throughout the body if you have too much. The body has mechanisms for controlling the exposure of our cells and tissues to iron. Heme iron short-circuits them. We need iron, but we need the right amount in the right place, not too much in the wrong place.

Q: How might heme iron raise the risk of diabetes?

A: Iron has long been known to be toxic to the islet cells in the pancreas, which secrete insulin. We've known for a long time that hemochromatosis, a genetic form of iron storage disease, is related to a higher risk of diabetes. The islet cells are damaged by iron accumulation. In medical school, they called some people with hemochromatosis golden diabetics because their skin was tinted gold.

Q: How would you rank sources of protein from best to worst?

A: Plant sources look the best. That includes nuts and beans, and even whole grains contribute some protein. Their

Going Meatless?



Want help going meatless, at least one day a week? MeatlessMonday.com—launched with the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health—offers a heaping plateful of information and inspiration. (Studies show that people may be most health-conscious on Monday.)

fat profile is better than red meat's, they have no cholesterol or heme iron, and they have essential nutrients and fiber. Red meat has no fiber. So when we put all of those things together, it's not surprising that plant proteins are a healthier package.

Q: What's best after plant sources?

A: Poultry and fish. Fish has a special contribution of omega-3 fats, which are sparse in some people's diets. And poultry has better fats than red meats, so it's not surprising that it looks better. And eating poultry hasn't been linked to a higher risk of cancer, heart attack, stroke, or diabetes.

Q: What about dairy?

A: It quite consistently looks better than red meat but not as good as plant protein and usually not quite as good as poultry and fish. The dairy food that looks healthiest is yogurt, possibly because of its effect on the microbes in the gut.

Q: And plant proteins are better for the planet?

A: Yes. Red meat has the worst environmental impact of pretty much any food. That's largely because cattle produce methane, a potent greenhouse gas. And they're producing methane for long periods. The time to market is about a year and a half for grain-fed cattle and up to four years for grass-fed beef.

In contrast, chicken comes to market in six weeks. So chickens are alive for much less time, and they don't produce as much methane as cattle do.

Q: So grass-fed cattle save the greenhouse gases caused by growing grain, but the savings are lost because grass-fed cattle live longer?

A: Yes. Per cow, grass-fed cattle are equally bad for producing greenhouse gases. But if we stopped feeding grain to cattle, it would have huge advantages for our health and the environment.

If we only had grass-fed beef, there would be much less of it, so it would cost far more. We would treat it like lobster. If you really

loved it, you'd eat it a few times a year.

We would save the huge amounts of water needed to grow grain, we'd use less antibiotics, and we'd reduce pollution.

Q: How does grain-fed beef cause pollution?

A: Mostly from manure runoff. With grass-fed cattle, manure is dispersed across the fields, and it gets into a regenerative cycle. With grain-fed cattle, feedlot operations produce very concentrated quantities of manure.

Q: Beef that's as pricey as lobster would be a big change.

A: Yes, but the current cost of beef doesn't reflect the adverse impact of the way we now produce beef. Those costs include the huge environmental impacts of greenhouse gas production, pollution, and the healthcare costs of cardiovascular and other diseases.

Q: How is Harvard encouraging restaurants to shift toward plant proteins?

A: We're working with the Culinary Institute of America to network with restaurant operators and people who plan menus on a program called the



Chickpeas (aka garbanzo beans) show up in Indian curries, Middle Eastern hummus, and Italian soups. Mmm.

Protein Flip. The momentum toward plant proteins is motivated by concerns about health and the environment, but menus with less red meat can also be less expensive.

Until recently, plant proteins haven't been given the culinary atten-

tion that they deserve. In America, we often open a can of beans and dump them on the plate. Other cultures have learned thousands of ways to prepare beans that are interesting, flavorful, and enjoyable.

Q: Like Middle Eastern hummus made of garbanzo beans, Indian dal made of lentils, and Japanese dishes with edamame or tofu?

A: Yes. That's starting to find its way into the culinary world. At Harvard, our burgers now are almost all non-red-meat burgers. You can choose from a couple of different veggie burgers, a fish burger, a poultry burger. We go for many days without beef burgers. It takes creativity, testing, and trial and error to find burgers that people like. They can be commercially prepared, or you can put whole beans or other ingredients together in a patty.

Q: And the Protein Flip suggests smaller portions of animal protein?

A: Yes. The idea is to downsize to, say, a plate with a salad and three slices of red meat. Restaurants have found that people are happy with three to four ounces of fish rather than eight ounces if it's part of an entrée salad.

Q: Three or four ounces is supposed to be a serving, according to labels.

A: Right. But restaurants say that people complain if a fish entrée is less than 8 ounces. And steaks are even larger.



HOW DOES MEATLESS MONDAY HELP?



FOR EVERY BURGER SKIPPED,
YOU CAN SAVE ENOUGH
WATER TO SHOWER
WITH FOR THE NEXT



2.5
MONTHS.



MEATLESS MONDAY
#MeatlessMonday

Q: Do you eat red meat?

A: Maybe a few times a year. I don't enjoy red meat that much anymore, but sometimes I'll have it at a social occasion if that's what's being served. It's not like a religious abstention.

But I definitely eat more plant foods than I did years ago. For breakfast, I al-

most always have nuts along with fruits and whole grains. For lunch, it's usually tofu or beans or a peanut butter sandwich. And for dinner, it's often poultry or fish.

Q: Are antibiotics a problem only for beef?

A: No. We're talking about all livestock, including poultry. But some restaurant chains, like Chipotle and McDonald's, are committing themselves to using antibiotic-free poultry, which is good. Antibiotic resistance is a huge issue now.

Q: Because the antibiotics we need to fight infections in humans aren't working?

A: Yes. The massive use of antibiotics in animal production is contributing to the problem. Livestock producers say it's going to be tough to stop using antibiotics, and they can't do it overnight. But they realize that there is public concern and public pressure, and they don't want to be left behind.

Q: And giving antibiotics to animals can harm everyone, even people who don't eat meat?

A: Yes. Antibiotic resistance affects everyone who has a serious infection and needs antibiotics.

And high red meat consumption affects us all, not just the people who consume it. We're all paying a price for climate change in many ways, including higher food costs.

And, because the costs of diabetes and cardiovascular disease are covered by insurance, whether private or public, we all pay for the medical consequences of high red meat intake.

The accelerating loss of bio-



FOR EVERY BURGER SKIPPED,
YOU CAN SAVE ENOUGH
WATER TO DRINK
FOR THE NEXT



Enough Protein?

How much protein do you need? The Daily Value is 50 grams, but some experts argue that older people need more to prevent muscle loss. To play it safe, shoot for a protein target that's half your weight. So if you weigh 150 pounds, shoot for 75 grams of protein a day.

Odds are, you're getting plenty. The average woman consumes 66 grams a day, while men average 97 grams.

	Calories	Protein (g)
Chicken or turkey breast, skinless (4 oz. cooked) ¹	170	34
Beef or pork (4 oz. cooked) ¹	300	30
Salmon (4 oz. cooked) ¹	200	28
Shrimp (4 oz. cooked)	140	26
Greek yogurt, plain, 0% (6 oz.)	100	17
MorningStar Grillers Prime (1)	170	17
Gardein Mandarin Orange Crispy Chick'n (3.6 oz.)	180	17
Cottage cheese, 1% (½ cup)	80	14
Canned tuna, light, in water (2 oz. drained)	50	11
Tofu, extra-firm (4 oz.)	110	11
Soynuts (⅓ cup)	130	11
Lentils (½ cup cooked)	120	9
Milk, fat-free (1 cup)	80	8
Yogurt, plain, nonfat (6 oz.)	80	8
Edamame, shelled (½ cup cooked)	100	8
Silk Original Soymilk (1 cup) ¹	110	8
Beans (½ cup cooked) ¹	120	8
Quinoa (1 cup cooked)	220	8
Spaghetti (1 cup cooked)	220	8
Cheddar or swiss cheese (1 oz.) ¹	110	7
Almond or peanut butter (2 Tbs.) ¹	190	7
Egg, large (1)	70	6
Nuts (¼ cup) ¹	170	6
Whole wheat bread (1 slice, 1.5 oz.)	100	5
Gardenburger Original (1)	110	5
Hummus (2 Tbs.)	70	2
Frozen yogurt or ice cream (½ cup) ¹	120	2
Silk Original Almondmilk (1 cup)	60	1

¹Average.

Sources: USDA National Nutrient Database for Standard Reference, company information.

diversity is largely a result of growing massive amounts of grain and soy to feed to animals, not people. We are seeing this right before our eyes in New England as monarch butterflies are vanishing from places where they were abundant just a few years ago.

Q: Is the problem that many farmers plant only one crop?

A: Yes. When you fly over the Midwest, you can see that it has been transformed into vast monocultures of corn and soy. Our old family farm in Michigan was once a collection of small fields and hedgerows teaming with biodiversity. It's now been flattened with huge fields of corn and soybeans. Those monocultures have caused an enormous loss of biodiversity across great swaths of our country.

Q: How much of the corn and soybeans are going to feed cattle?

A: In the U.S., about 45 percent of the grain we grow is fed to animals, about 30 percent is for ethanol, another 15 or 20 percent is used to produce high fructose corn syrup and other manufactured foods, and only about 10 percent of the grain is fed to humans directly. It's amazing what a small fraction of the grain is actually consumed by humans.

Q: And we certainly don't need all that high fructose corn syrup.

A: Right. Or the ethanol, which we use to fuel highly inefficient cars and trucks. We have a bizarre food system that's off the tracks in terms of both human health and sustainability. 🍌

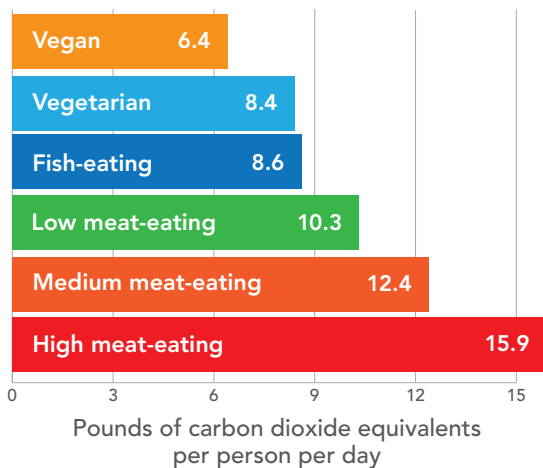
MEAT'S IMPACT

People who eat less red meat have a lower risk of heart disease, stroke, diabetes, and colorectal cancer. But cutting back would also aid the planet. Here's some of the damage done to the Earth by the way we raise and feed livestock. 🍌

The information on the environmental impact of meat was compiled by Lindsay Moyer.

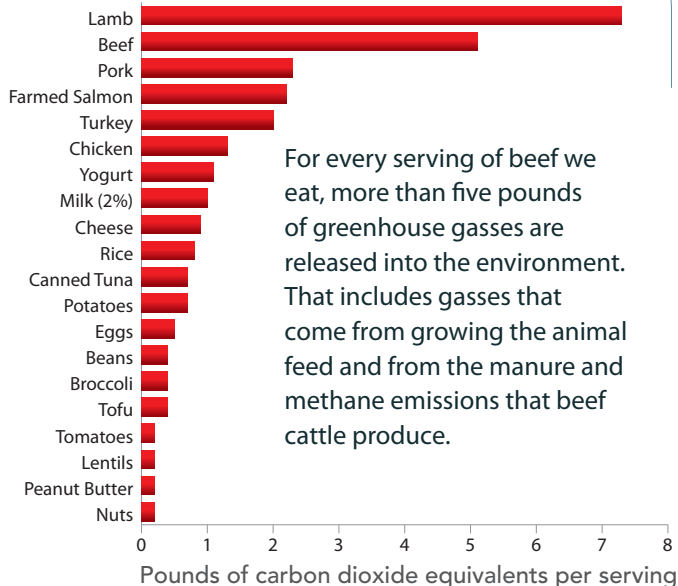
Warming the Planet

Want to help curb climate change? Leave meat behind. Even switching from "high meat-eating" (more than 3½ oz. a day) to "low meat-eating" (less than 1¾ oz. a day) trims your diet's greenhouse gas bill by a third.



Source: *Clim. Change* 125: 179, 2014. doi:10.1007/s10584-014-1169-1.

Beefing Up Emissions



For every serving of beef we eat, more than five pounds of greenhouse gasses are released into the environment. That includes gasses that come from growing the animal feed and from the manure and methane emissions that beef cattle produce.

Source: ewg.org/meateatersguide.

Making a Splash

One way to measure a food's "water footprint" is to calculate the **number of gallons of water it takes to produce one serving of the food**. For animals, it's not just the water they drink, but also the water it takes to grow all of the food they will eat over their lifetime.



Beef 464



Chocolate 182



Pork 180



Chicken 130



Nuts 101



Milk 65



Beans 47



Bananas 46



Eggs 43



Apples 30



Cheese 25



Bread 21



Spinach 7



Broccoli 6



Lettuce 5

Source: waterfootprint.org.

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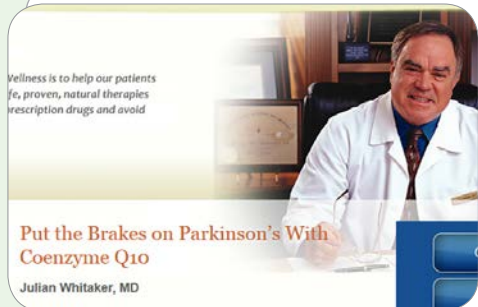


NOT SO FAST

6 hollow supplement claims

BY DAVID SCHARDT

Melt away fat. Restore your memory. Slow down Parkinson's disease and cancer. Companies and Internet doctors can't make those claims about supplements without good evidence, right? Wrong. They do it all the time, sometimes for years. Here are a half dozen you may have seen.



NOQ10 FOR PARKINSON'S

"Put the Brakes on Parkinson's with Coenzyme Q10," Julian Whitaker ("America's Most Trusted Wellness Doctor") urges visitors to his website.

CoQ10 for Parkinson's? Sorry.

Not so fast. More than a decade ago, a preliminary study suggested that CoQ10 (300 to 1,200 mg a day) could slow the progression of Parkinson's.¹ But a much larger trial, which was launched in 2009 with funding from the National Institutes of Health, was stopped early when monitors saw no improvement in 600 Parkinson's patients who were being given 1,200 or 2,400 mg a day of CoQ10.²

"We are quite disappointed, but we can't argue with the data," the lead investigator told Alzforum, a website for Alzheimer's and Parkinson's researchers.

¹ *Arch. Neurol.* 59: 1541, 2002.

² *JAMA Neurol.* 71: 543, 2014.

REMEMBER PREVAGEN?

"For support of healthier brain function, a sharper mind, and clearer thinking, try Prevagen for yourself today," say the ads on the evening network news programs.

The supplement contains a synthetic copy of a jellyfish protein that "our brains need for healthy function," says Prevagen's manufacturer, Quincy Bioscience.

Not so fast. The main evidence behind Prevagen's "thinking" and "memory" claims is an unpublished company study done five years ago. It gave 218 people aged 40 to 91 who reported having mild memory problems either 10 mg of Prevagen or a placebo every day.¹

After three months, according to Quincy, those taking Prevagen improved on four computer tasks: learning

a path through a maze, remembering their way out of the maze, recalling a list of words, and remembering playing cards they had seen.

What the company doesn't disclose in its ads or on its website: the placebo takers did just as well as the Prevagen takers on three of the four tasks. It apparently forgot about that detail.

¹ www.prevagen.com/research.

PROBIOSLIM EVIDENCE

"Boost your sluggish metabolism." "Burn fat fast."

Probioslim's ingredients were "rigorously researched and vetted by our Harvard- and MIT-trained scientists," claims its manufacturer. (The company wouldn't tell us who they are.)

Not so fast. It doesn't take a Harvard degree to see that Probioslim won't help you lose weight.

The weight-loss ingredients in the "revolutionary" supplement are green tea extract and caffeine. But caffeine was no better than a placebo in the only trial that looked at whether it can help people lose weight.¹ And a recent meta-analysis of studies on 1,945 people concluded that the impact of green tea extract on weight "was statistically not significant."²

The latest study testing doses of green tea extract similar to what's in Probioslim also came up empty. Among 83 obese premenopausal Spanish women, those who took 300 mg of green tea extract every day for three months lost no more weight or fat than those who got a placebo.³

¹ *Int. J. Obes. Relat. Metab. Disord.* 16: 269, 1992.

² *Cochrane Database Syst. Rev.* 2015. doi:10.1002/14651858.CD008650.

³ *Br. J. Nutr.* 111: 1263, 2014.



Don't count on it to help.

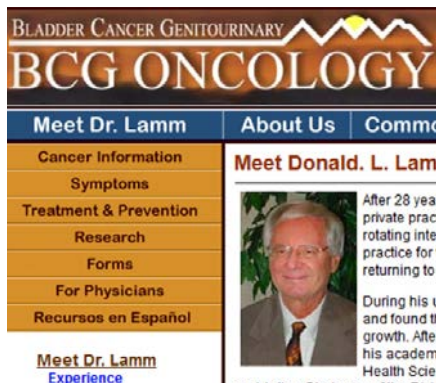


Prevagen is Proven Effective to Help Memory*

In a large double-blind, placebo controlled study[†], using computers to assess brain performance, Prevagen significantly improved:

- ✓ Short-term memory
- ✓ Word recall
- ✓ Learning

No better than a placebo in 3 of 4 memory tests.



Oncovite flunked its biggest test.

as “a targeted multivitamin favored by people with specific oncology concerns.” That claim is illegal, since Oncovite has never been approved for treating cancer patients.

Oncovite contains more than five times the Daily Values of zinc and vitamins A, B-6, C, and E. In a study done

TAKING AN ONCOVITE OUT OF CANCER

“This was recommended to me by my doc after being diagnosed with bladder cancer,” reads a typical review of Oncovite on amazon.com.

Some merchants who sell the supplement through Amazon describe Oncovite

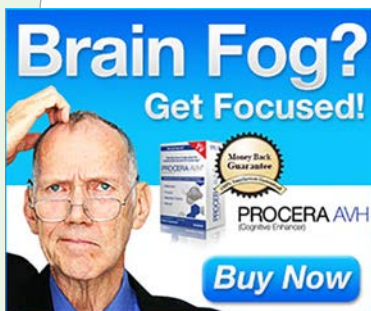
more than 20 years ago, Donald Lamm, then a University of West Virginia urologist, reported that 35 bladder cancer patients who were given Oncovite for 10 months were half as likely to have their cancers recur than 30 patients who received an ordinary multivitamin.¹

Not so fast. In Lamm’s 2010 followup trial, which was much larger and lasted much longer, the 334 bladder cancer patients who got Oncovite every day for two years were just as likely to suffer a recurrence of their tumors as the 336 who got an ordinary multi.²

Lamm, now in private practice in Arizona, sells Oncovite on his website, where he claims that it is “beneficial” for bladder cancer. Neither Lamm’s website nor the website of the supplement’s manufacturer lets on that Oncovite flunked its big test.

¹ *J. Urol.* 151: 21, 1994.

² *J. Urol.* 184: 1915, 2010.



It’s never been tested in the people it claims to help.

infomercials, radio spots, and direct mail.

From 2006 to 2014, the companies made \$96 million selling the supplement, which contains vinpocetine, huperzine A, and acetyl-L-carnitine. All are found in dozens of other “memory” pills.

Not so fast. Procera has never been tested in people with memory complaints or “brain fog.” In the supplement’s one published study, 43 healthy middle-aged people who took Procera for a month scored no better on cognition and memory tests than 31 placebo takers.¹

Earlier this year, the U.S. Federal Trade Commission charged the companies with false advertising. The FTC obtained a \$1.4 million settlement and the companies’ promise not to make memory or concentration claims without solid evidence.

They’re still selling Procera—as a “breakthrough brain supplement that supports brain health and cognitive function.” (Unfortunately, structure-function claims like that don’t need evidence.) The cost of a three-month supply: \$135.

¹ *JANA* 12: 1, 2009.

LIGHTS OUT

“Lights up aging brains like a Christmas tree!” “Quickly restore focus, concentration, and even memory, to the levels they were as much as 10 to 15 years ago.”

That’s what a network of companies in Florida, California, and Washington have been claiming about Procera AVH pills in newspaper ads,

NO NAIL BITER

“Promotes healthy hair and strong nails,” say the Natrol Biotin bottles.

Biotin, which is a B vitamin, is so cheap that companies are marketing huge doses. (Natrol sells 10,000-microgram tablets. The Recommended Dietary Allowance is 30 mcg.)

Not so fast. No good studies have ever shown that biotin strengthens nails or prevents hair loss.

The evidence for nails that proponents typically cite, for example, comes from a small, flawed study conducted more than 25 years ago by a European biotin manufacturer.¹

For nine months, the company gave 2,500 micrograms a day of biotin to 22 people with “brittle” fingernails who were divided into two groups (the researchers never explained why). Average nail thickness increased by 25 percent in one group and didn’t change in the other. No matter. There was no placebo group to compare those results with.

Biotin deficiency is almost unheard of because the vitamin is found in so many foods. 🍌

¹ *J. Am. Acad. Dermatol.* 23: 1127, 1990.



It won’t do a thing for your nails or hair.



Is Less More?

Animals live longer if they're fed roughly 25 percent fewer calories than they need. Longevity is hard to measure in people, but results are in from the CALERIE Study, the first long-term trial testing a lower-calorie diet on risk factors for disease. Scientists randomly assigned 218 people to cut their calories by 25 percent or to eat their usual diets. The participants, aged 21 to 51, were overweight or normal weight, not obese. All took a multivitamin-and-mineral and a calcium supplement (1,000 mg a day).

After two years, the people in the CR (calorie-restriction) group had trimmed their calories by only 12 percent, and had lost an average of 17 pounds. The usual diet group didn't gain or lose weight.

The CR group also had lower LDL ("bad") cholesterol, triglycerides, blood pressure, insulin resistance, and C-reactive protein (a marker of inflammation). They reported no change in mood, hunger, sexual function, or thinking ability. The only adverse effects: bone density dropped more in the CR group, and four of its members were diagnosed with anemia.

What to do: It's worth cutting calories if you're overweight (or obese). Eating less may also have benefits if you're normal weight, but get a regular checkup to make sure your blood count and bone density stay normal.

J. Gerontolog. A Biol. Sci. Med. Sci. 2015. doi:10.1093/gerona/glv057.

"Free-From" Foods

Do "free-from" claims convince people that they need to avoid the missing ingredient?

To find out, researchers showed 256 adults two pairs of cracker labels. One pair showed crackers with or without a "gluten-free" claim. The second pair showed crackers with or without a "MUI-free" claim. There is no food constituent called MUI. The researchers made it up.



When asked which of each pair was healthier, 26 percent picked the "gluten-free" crackers and 22 percent picked the "MUI-free" crackers. Most (65 percent) said there was no difference (11 percent said the conventional crackers were healthier).

What to do: Don't assume that foods with "free-from" claims are healthier.

J. Acad. Nutr. Diet. 2015. doi:10.1016/j.jand.2015.03.013.

Kids, Cartoons, and Candies

Cartoons using overweight characters may encourage children to eat more.

Researchers showed 60 eighth-graders a picture of a normal-weight character, an overweight character, or a neutral object (a mug), and then offered the students bowls of Hershey's Kisses or Starburst candies.

Kids who saw the overweight character took more candies (an average of 4) than those who saw the mug or the normal-weight character (2).

In a second experiment, 74 sixth- and seventh-graders who were shown the overweight

character or both the normal- and overweight characters took more candies (3) than those who saw only the normal-weight character (2).

Then the researchers showed 167 children in elementary school either an overweight or normal-weight character and

offered them cookies. Those who saw the overweight character ate more cookies (4) than those who saw the normal-weight character (3).

But if the researchers first asked the kids to "think about things that make you healthy" and to choose healthier pictures (say, milk over soda), the characters had no impact on the number of cookies the kids ate.

What to do: Beware of subtle influences that make you—or your children—overeat. 🍌

J. Consumer Psych. 2015. doi:10.1016/j.jcps.2015.06.003.



Normal Weight



Overweight



Control



Time for Tofu

BY KATE SHERWOOD

Don't have a clue what to do with those tubs of tofu packed in water? Are you in for a treat! Welcome to the wonderful world of plant protein. 🌱

Got a question or suggestion? Write to Kate at healthycook@cspinet.org.



Tofu Peanut Stew

Not a curry powder fan? Season with plenty of freshly ground black pepper instead.

- 1 14 oz. package extra-firm tofu, drained
- 2 Tbs. peanut oil, divided
- 1 large onion, finely chopped
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- ½ tsp. curry or chili powder (optional)
- 1 cup diced tomatoes
- ¼ cup crunchy peanut butter
- ½ tsp. kosher salt
- 4 cups baby spinach leaves

Cut the tofu into ½-inch cubes and blot with a paper towel. ● In large non-stick pan, heat 1 Tbs. of the oil over medium heat until shimmering hot. Sauté the tofu until lightly browned on 2 sides, 3-4 minutes. Remove from the pan. ● Sauté the onion in the remaining 1 Tbs. of oil until lightly browned, 2-3 minutes. Add the garlic and curry powder and sauté for 30 seconds. Stir in the tomatoes, peanut butter, and salt with 2 cups of water. Simmer until the sauce has thickened, 5-7 minutes. ● Stir in the spinach and return the tofu to the pan. Serves 4.

Per serving (1½ cups): calories 300
carbs 16 g | total fat 20 g | sat fat 3 g
sodium 350 mg | fiber 5 g | protein 16 g



Chipotle Tofu Lettuce Tacos

Chipotle chili powder is smoky and spicy. For the smoke without the heat, use smoked paprika instead. McCormick and other spice companies sell both.

- 1 14 oz. package extra-firm tofu, drained
- 2 Tbs. extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tsp. chipotle chili powder
- ½ cup fresh-squeezed orange juice
- ½ tsp. kosher salt
- 12 medium butter lettuce leaves
- 1 avocado, chopped
- ¼ cup cilantro leaves
- 2 cups shredded red cabbage
- ½ cup crumbled tortilla chips
- 1 lime, cut into wedges

Cut the tofu into ½-inch cubes and blot with a paper towel. ● In a large non-stick pan, heat 1 Tbs. of the oil over medium heat until shimmering hot. Sauté the tofu until lightly browned on 2 sides, 3-4 minutes. Remove from the pan. ● Sauté the garlic in the remaining 1 Tbs. of oil for 30 seconds. Add the chili powder, orange juice, and salt. Simmer until reduced to a sticky sauce, 2-3 minutes. ● Return the tofu to the pan and stir to coat with the sauce. Serve in the lettuce leaves with the avocado, cilantro, cabbage, and tortilla chips. Serve with lime wedges. Serves 4.

Per serving (3 tacos): calories 280 | carbs 17 g
total fat 19 g | sat fat 2.5 g | sodium 300 mg
fiber 5 g | protein 12 g



Stir-Fried Tofu

Take your time prepping the ingredients. Once you turn on the burner, you'll be done in a flash.

- 1 14 oz. package extra-firm tofu, drained
- 1 Tbs. reduced-sodium soy sauce
- 1 Tbs. oyster sauce
- 1 Tbs. Worcestershire sauce
- 3 Tbs. dry sherry
- ½ tsp. brown sugar
- ½ tsp. cornstarch
- 2 Tbs. peanut oil, divided
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tsp. minced ginger
- ½ lb. snow peas, trimmed and cut into thin strips
- 1 large carrot, cut into matchsticks

Cut the tofu into ½-inch cubes and blot with a paper towel. ● In a small bowl, mix the soy sauce, oyster sauce, Worcestershire, sherry, sugar, and cornstarch with ¼ cup water. ● In a large non-stick pan, heat 1 Tbs. of the oil over medium heat until shimmering hot. Sauté the tofu until lightly browned on 2 sides, 3-4 minutes. Remove from the pan. ● Sauté the garlic and ginger in the remaining 1 Tbs. of oil for 30 seconds. Pour the soy sauce mixture into the pan and simmer until thickened, 2-3 minutes. Pour over the tofu. ● In the same pan over high heat, stir-fry the snow peas and carrots until hot and tender-crisp, 1-2 minutes. Toss with the tofu. Serves 4.

Per serving (1½ cups): calories 210
carbs 11 g | total fat 12 g | sat fat 2 g
sodium 330 mg | fiber 3 g | protein 12 g



In a Nutshell

Are nuts all they're cracked up to be?

BY JAYNE HURLEY & BONNIE LIEBMAN



Nut companies are, um, going nuts. Labels, ads, and websites promise that nuts will make you more powerful, energetic, and slimmer, protect your heart, and deliver a load of protein, vitamins, and minerals.

Nuts (and seeds) are indeed rich in heart-healthy unsaturated fats and other nutrients. But nuts are not all created equal. A cashew isn't a pistachio. A macadamia isn't an almond. And some nuts come smothered in sugar, salt, or fake yogurt. Here's how to find the best.

Information compiled by Lindsay Moyer.



Watch your figure.

49 PISTACHIOS
160 calories
6 grams protein
3 grams fiber

Watch your backside.

13 FLAVORED TORTILLA CHIPS
160 calories
2 grams protein
1 gram fiber

Fruits and veggies beat both nuts and chips.

For the same calories, you get a lot more pistachios than flavored tortilla chips," says the smaller print. (Each has 160 calories.)

"If you're watching your waistline, almonds may be the key to tipping the scales in your favor," says the Almond Board of California.

In most studies, people who are told to eat a serving of nuts each day don't gain weight. But that's because they compensate by eating less of something else, not because nuts magically prevent weight gain.

To really tip the scales in your favor, make fruit or veggies your go-to snack. A half cup of blueberries has 40 calories; a half cup of grape tomatoes has 25.

Nuts are calorie dense, so you have to keep track of how much you're munching. A 1 oz. serving is about 20 almonds, cashews, or pecan halves. (See "What's a Serving?" p. 14.)

Just beware: What looks like a single-serve bag may have 2 to 3 servings. A small non-resealable pouch of Frito-Lay Deluxe Mixed Nuts, for example, holds 2¾ oz. ...and delivers 470 calories.

Calorie Smart?

"Watch your figure," says the text next to a bowl of 49 pistachios in the Wonderful Pistachios ad. "Watch your backside," says the text next to a bowl of 13 tortilla chips.

"For the same calories,

The Protein Pitch

"Good source of protein," say the 16 oz. bags of Blue Diamond Roasted Salted Almonds. "A protein powerhouse," brags the SuperSeeds Sea Salt Gourmet Pumpkin Seeds bag.

Let's not get carried away.

An ounce of most nuts has 4 to 6 grams of protein. A few—pecans (3 grams) and macadamias (2 grams)—have less. And a few—peanuts (7 grams), pumpkin seeds (9 grams), and soynuts (11 grams)—have more. (Peanuts and soynuts are technically legumes, not nuts.)

But along with that protein come 150 to 200 calories. Beans, tofu, Greek yogurt, milk, fish, and poultry give you more protein for your calorie buck.

Still, nuts have more protein than most other sources of unsaturated fat like avocados, vegetable oils, and mayo. So that's a plus.

Just watch out for tricky claims.

"Each serving provides 10g of protein for a hearty snack that helps keep you satisfied between meals," says the Planters NUT-rition Blueberry Nut Protein Mix box. Hearty is right. Each 1.8 oz. single-serve pack contains 260 calories and 3½ teaspoons of (mostly added) sugar.

That's because Planters waters down its nutrient-rich nuts with "granola protein clusters" (mostly soybeans, sugars, soy protein, and oats) and "yogurt covered raisins" (mostly sugars, palm and palm kernel oils, and raisins). The company wouldn't be trying to trim its costs by mixing nuts with—what else?—sugar and oil, would it?

And there's nothing special about Protein Mix's 10 grams of protein. For the same 260 calories (and no added sugar), you'd get 12 grams of protein from plain peanuts.



10 grams of protein for 260 calories is no bargain.



Power Up?

Pistachios “help maintain endurance for every finish line,” says the American Pistachio Growers ad.

“Power to dig a little deeper,” says the National Peanut Board ad.

“Power to keep you rolling right along,” says the Almond Board of California ad. “Energize your day with the crunch of almonds.”

“Power” sounds great, but it just means calories.

“Energy.” Ignore them both. When either appears on a food label, it just means “calories”...and nuts have plenty of those.

You might get a little boost from Blue Diamond Oven Roasted Café Mocha Almonds (an Honorable Mention). But that’s because Blue Diamond adds caffeine (“as much caffeine as ¼ cup of coffee,” notes the label). It has nuttin’ to do with nuts.

“Power” is the new

The Heart Sell

“Put your hand over your heart,” says Mr. Peanut in the Planters TV ad. “Is it beating? Good! Then my NUT-rition Heart Healthy Mix is for you.”



Most nuts should help lower LDL (“bad”) cholesterol.

Will eating nuts lower your risk of heart disease? Almonds and walnuts are the best studied, but most nuts and seeds should help lower LDL (“bad”) cholesterol. That’s largely because they have considerably more LDL-lowering polyunsaturated fats than LDL-raising saturated fats, although other constituents, like plant sterols, may also help lower LDL. (See “Nut vs. Nut.”)

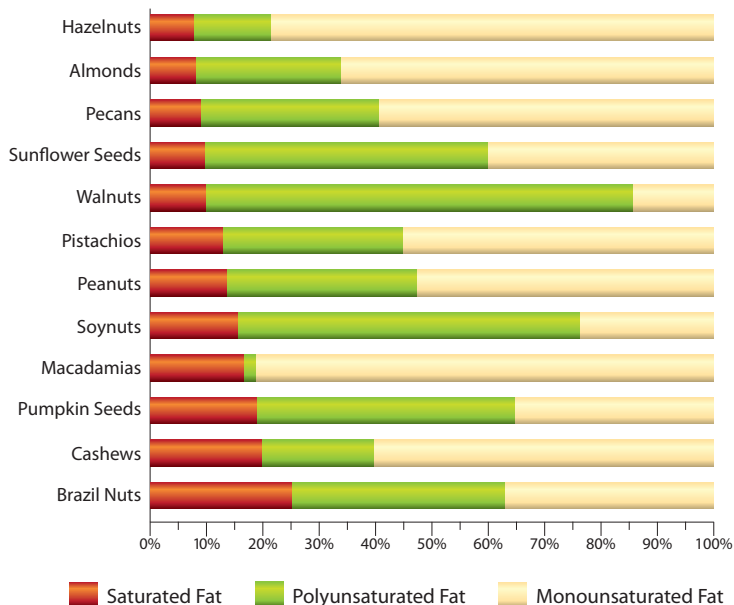
Three nuts—Brazil nuts, cashews, and macadamias—have less polys or more sat fat or both. That’s why they didn’t get a Best Bite or Honorable Mention.

It’s not just LDL. In 2013, the PREDIMED study reported that Spaniards who ate 120 calories a day of nuts (almonds, hazelnuts, and walnuts) for nearly five years had 30 percent fewer cardiovascular “events,” especially strokes.¹ The study was stopped early, so it’s not a slam dunk. (See May 2013, p. 1.)

Still, lowering LDL is reason enough to add nuts to your diet—as long as you eat them instead of foods that are rich in saturated fat, sugar, or white flour. (See “Go Nuts,” p. 14.)

¹ *N. Engl. J. Med.* 368: 1279, 1353, 2013.

NUT VS. NUT



Most nuts or seeds should help lower your LDL (“bad”) cholesterol, especially if it’s high. That’s because they have considerably more polyunsaturated fat than saturated fat. Those with the most poly vs. saturated: walnuts, sunflower seeds, and soynuts. Those with the least: Brazil nuts, cashews, and macadamias (so they don’t get a Best Bite or Honorable Mention—see p. 15). Just remember to eat nuts instead of foods that are rich in saturated fat (like cheese, butter, or ice cream) or in refined carbs (like cookies, cupcakes, or chips).

Source: USDA National Nutrient Database for Standard Reference (ndb.nal.usda.gov).

Shopping Tips

■ **Trim sodium.** Most nuts taste perfectly fine without salt, but if you want some, look for “low sodium,” “lightly salted,” or “50% less salt” on the label.

■ **Minimize sugar.** Skip clusters, glazed, candied, or chocolate- or yogurt-coated nuts. If you have a sweet tooth, stick with honey roasted or lightly dusted with cocoa or other flavorings.

■ **Watch the serving.** 1 oz. isn’t much. For around \$5, including shipping, the Almond Board of California will send you a refillable (empty) tin that holds 1 oz. of almonds (almonds.com/consumers/snacking/portion).



■ **Shell your own.** That may slow you down, especially if the shells remind you of how many you’ve eaten.

The Almond Board’s 1 oz. tin. Or improvise your own.



What's a Serving?

Here's the number of nuts in a 1 oz. serving. One ounce of sunflower or pumpkin seeds is about ¼ cup, or roughly 4 level tablespoons. Expect 150 to 200 calories in each ounce of nuts or seeds.



Almonds

20-24



Brazil Nuts

6-8



Cashews

16-18



Hazelnuts

19-21



Macadamias

10-12



Peanuts

about 40



Pecans

18-20 halves



Pistachios

47-49



Walnuts

10-14 halves

Sources: International Tree Nut Council Nutrition Research & Education Foundation, National Peanut Board.

Go Nuts

Here are some ideas for swapping nuts for less-healthy foods.

- Sprinkle toasted nuts instead of croutons on your salad.
- Snack on a handful of nuts (and fruit) instead of a candy bar or granola bar.
- Replace a sugary cereal that has nuts in its name (like Honey Nut Cheerios or Kellogg's Crunchy Nut) with a whole-grain cereal that has little or no added sugar (like shredded wheat). Then add your own nuts (and fruit).
- Garnish sautéed vegetables with toasted slivered almonds or with sunflower seeds instead of cheese.

- Use smoked nuts instead of bacon in salads.
- Nosh on a handful of nuts instead of potato chips or pretzels.
- Eat a peanut butter or almond butter sandwich instead of ham & swiss.
- Replace breading on baked fish or chicken with a coating of sliced almonds or other chopped nuts.
- Instead of eating a sweetened yogurt, add some toasted nuts (and berries, sliced peaches, bananas, etc.) to plain low-fat yogurt.



Sautéed spinach with nuts. Say no more.



Nuts can dress up any salad.

TIPS

- To bring out the flavor of nuts and seeds, bake them for 5 to 10 minutes at 350° F. (Watch out: they burn quickly!)
- To preserve their crunch, don't add nuts to salads or vegetables until just before eating.
- To keep nuts fresh, store them in a zipper bag or plastic container in the freezer. 🍌

The Shell Game

Best Bites (✓✓) have no added salt or sugar. **Honorable Mentions** (✓) can have up to 80 mg of sodium and 5 grams of sugars (about 1 tsp.). All are free of acesulfame-potassium, sucralose, and ingredients like granola or sesame sticks, and none list cashews, macadamias, or Brazil nuts as their first ingredient. Nuts are ranked from least to most sodium, then calories, then protein. Sweetened nuts are ranked from least to most sugars, then sodium, then calories.

Almonds (1 oz., 20-24 nuts)

	Calories	Protein (g)	Sodium (mg)
✓✓ Unsalted, any brand	160	6	0
✓ Archer Farms (Target) Roasted Lightly Salted	170	6	40
✓ Blue Diamond Low Sodium Lightly Salted	170	6	40
✓ Trader Joe's Thai Lime & Chili	190	7	40
✓ Trader Joe's Dry Roasted 50% Less Salt	180	7	60
Blue Diamond Roasted Salted	170	6	85
Back to Nature California Sea Salt Roasted	180	6	85
Blue Diamond BOLD ¹	170	6	130
Blue Diamond Oven Roasted Sea Salt	170	6	135
Blue Diamond Smokehouse	170	6	150

Peanuts (1 oz., about 40 nuts)

✓✓ Unsalted, any brand	160	7	5
✓ Planters Cocktail Lightly Salted	170	7	45
✓ Trader Joe's Roasted 50% Less Salt	160	7	55
✓ Planters Dry Roasted Lightly Salted	170	7	70
Market Pantry (Target) Dry Roasted Lightly Salted	160	7	95
Planters—Classic or Cocktail ¹	170	7	95
Planters Redskin Spanish	170	7	115
Planters—Chili Lime, Chipotle, or Dry Roasted ¹	160	7	150
Planters Smoked	160	7	200

Pistachios (1 oz., 47-49 nuts, shelled)

✓✓ Unsalted, any brand	160	6	0
✓ Wonderful Lightly Salted	160	6	70
✓ Trader Joe's Roasted 50% Less Salt	180	6	80
Planters Dry Roasted	160	6	150
Wonderful Roasted & Salted—shelled or unshelled ¹	160	6	160
Wonderful—Salt & Pepper or Sweet Chili ¹	160	6	290

Miscellaneous Nuts (nuts in 1 oz.)

✓✓ Soynuts, unsalted, any brand (1/3 cup)	130	11	0
✓✓ Hazelnuts (filberts), unsalted, any brand (19-21)	180	4	0
Brazil nuts, unsalted, any brand (6-8)	190	4	0
✓✓ Walnuts, unsalted, any brand (10-14 halves)	190	4	0
✓✓ Pecans, unsalted, any brand (18-20 halves)	200	3	0
Macadamias, unsalted, any brand (10-12)	200	2	0
Cashews, unsalted, any brand (16-18)	160	5	5
✓ 365 (Whole Foods) Organic Whole Soynuts Roasted & Salted (1/3 cup)	130	12	40

Mixed Nuts (1 oz., about 1/4 cup, unless noted)

✓ Planters NUT-rition Heart Healthy Mix	170	6	35
✓ Planters Lightly Salted	170	6	40
Planters Deluxe Lightly Salted ^x	170	5	40
✓ Planters NUT-rition Men's Health Mix	170	7	45
✓ 365 (Whole Foods) Deluxe Roasted & Salted	170	5	55
✓ Emerald Peanuts Almonds & Cashews	160	6	80
✓ Planters Pistachio Blend	160	6	80

	Calories	Protein (g)	Sodium (mg)
Planters	170	6	85
Frito-Lay Deluxe (2.75 oz. pack) ^x	470	13	370

Pumpkin Seeds (1 oz., about 1/4 cup, shelled)

✓✓ Unsalted, any brand	160	9	0
✓ David Roasted & Salted	190	10	35*
✓ SuperSeedz Gourmet—Curry or Somewhat Spicy ¹	160	8	65
✓ Trader Joe's Roasted & Salted	170	9	70
✓ Trader Joe's In Shell Lightly Salted	170	9	75*
SuperSeedz Gourmet Sea Salt	160	8	210

Sunflower Seeds (1 oz., about 1/4 cup, shelled)

✓✓ Unsalted, any brand	170	6	5
✓ David Jumbo Reduced Sodium	190	8	75*
Planters Dry Roasted Kernels	170	6	180

Sweetened (1 oz., about 1/4 cup, unless noted)

	Calories	Protein (g)	Sodium (mg)	Sugars (tsp.)
Emerald Cocoa Roast Almonds ⁵	160	6	25	0
✓ SuperSeedz Gourmet Pumpkin Seeds—Cinnamon & Sugar or Coco Joe ¹	160	7	35	0.5
✓ Blue Diamond Almonds—Oven Roasted Café Mocha, Salted Caramel, or Toasted Coconut ¹	160	6	40	0.5
✓ 365 (Whole Foods) Pollinator Friendly Honey Roasted Almonds	170	5	35	1
✓ Blue Diamond Almonds—Honey Roasted, Oven Roasted Dark Chocolate, or Sea Salt Dark Chocolate ¹	160	5	45	1
✓ Planters Cocoa Peanuts	160	6	70	1
✓ Trader Joe's Pecans—Candied or Sweet & Spicy ¹	190	2	70	1
True North Almond Pecan Crunch (5 clusters)	150	4	85	1
Planters Honey Roasted Peanuts Dry Roasted	160	7	100	1
Planters Honey Roasted Mixed Nuts	160	5	120	1
Blue Diamond Oven Roasted Blueberry Almonds	160	5	25	1.5
Planters NUT-rition Digestive Health Mix	150	4	40	1.5
Blue Diamond Honey Roasted Vanilla Almonds	160	5	45	1.5
True North Chocolate Nut Crunch (5 clusters)	150	4	70	1.5
Planters Salted Caramel Peanuts	160	6	110	1.5
Emerald Nutty Bites Chai ^x	140	4	125	1.5
Planters NUT-rition Energy Mix	200	5	125	1.5
Planters NUT-rition Antioxidant Mix	160	4	0	2.5
Emerald Raspberry Glazed Almonds	130	4	140	2.5
Rickland Orchards Greek on the go! Almond Bites (1.4 oz.) ^f	220	4	5	3.5
Planters NUT-rition Protein Mix Blueberry Nut (1.8 oz. pack)	260	10	125	3.5
Brookside Whole Almonds in Smooth Dark Chocolate (1.4 oz.) ^f	210	4	30	4
Ghirardelli Milk Choc. Spiced Almond (1.4 oz.) ^f	210	4	20	4.5

✓✓ Best Bite. ✓ Honorable Mention. ¹ Average. ^x Cashews are the first ingredient. * Doesn't include salt on the shells. ⁵ Contains acesulfame-potassium and sucralose. ^f Contains at least 5 grams of saturated fat.

Daily Limits (for a 2,000-calorie diet): **Sodium:** 1,500 mg. **Added Sugars:** 6 teaspoons (25 grams) for women, 9 teaspoons (38 grams) for men. **Daily Protein Target:** 75 grams.

Sources: company information, U.S. Department of Agriculture. The use of information from this article for commercial purposes is strictly prohibited without written permission from CSPI.

RIGHT STUFF

BULLS EYE



“A blend of whole grains, lentils, spinach, broccoli, white beans, and sauce,” says the label of **Birds Eye Steamfresh Italian Style Protein Blend**.

We’re talking protein from plants—mostly beans and

grains—that may be overlooked by protein seekers.

Yet each 270-calorie cup of the Italian Style Blend has 12 grams of protein. That’s a decent dose, whether you’re shooting for the Daily Value (50 grams) or more.

What’s more, it comes with 13 grams (half a day’s worth) of fiber, 10 percent of a day’s calcium, and 20 percent each of a day’s vitamins A and C. And the 450 milligrams of sodium (mostly from the sauce) isn’t too bad, considering that the dish consists of potassium-rich beans and veggies.

Birds Eye doesn’t stop with Italian. There’s also **Asian Style** (whole grains, shelled edamame, carrots, red peppers, and sauce), **California Style** (whole grains, lentils, peas, broccoli, shelled edamame, and sauce), and **Southwest Style** (whole grains, black beans, corn, lentils, red bell peppers, and sauce).

(Note: Only the Asian Style grains are 100 percent whole, but the other grains are *mostly* whole.)

Your job: pop it in the microwave for about five minutes...and eat.

Call it Birds Easy.

birdseye.com — (800) 563-1786

FOOD PORN

SKILLER COOKIE

“Oven-baked chocolate chip cookie topped with vanilla ice cream & drizzled with hot fudge,” says **Chili’s** menu. Gosh. What will the folks at headquarters think of next?

The **Skillet Chocolate Chip Cookie** comes to the table in (spoiler alert) a skillet. And it’s warm because it was baked (can you *believe* it?) in an oven.

The flattened-pot-pie-size “cookie” is about what you’d get by baking half a *roll* of refrigerated cookie dough. But why stop there? Chili’s adds a “drizzle” of hot fudge and a mound of (cold) ice cream, in case a giant cookie, by itself, is dullsville. Eat it quick before the ice cream melts!



What with all that excitement, who’s gonna think about calories? By the time your skillet is empty, all 1,200 of them will be en route to a new home (probably in your midsection). Some come from the 25 teaspoons of sugars. Others come from the load of white flour or the 30 grams (1½ days’ worth) of saturated fat. Yum.

It’s like eating a Quarter Pounder with Cheese plus *two* Hot Fudge Sundaes from McDonald’s.

Bored? Try Chili’s **Cinnamon Skillet Rolls**, which have a mere 980 calories...1,170 if you add vanilla ice cream.

“All of our DELICIOUS DESSERTS are made with LOVE and devoured with enthusiasm,” says Chili’s.

That’s some tough love.

brinker.com — (972) 980-9917

dish OF THE MONTH



Roasted Roots & Seeds

Chop 2 lbs. of root vegetables (like carrots, beets, radishes, and turnips) into bite-sized pieces. Toss with 2 Tbs. extra-virgin olive oil and roast at 425°F until tender and browned in spots, 20-25 minutes. Sprinkle with ¼ cup roasted, salted pumpkin seeds. Serves 4.

quick tip

If microwave cooking instructions include a “let stand” time, follow it. Foods continue to cook after the microwave is off. Standing gives them time to reach a safe internal temperature. Bonus: You’ll also be less likely to burn your tongue.