When it comes to nourishing our bodies, all calories are not equal. Compared to pretzels and jelly beans with the same calories, one serving of peanuts provides 1.5 times and almost 7 times as much protein, has almost 2 times as much fiber, with less total carbohydrate. Although the fat content is higher it is predominately monounsaturated fat, which is a heart healthy fat recommended to improve blood lipids in moderation as part of a healthy diet.

### Is a Calorie a Calorie?

#### Reference


#### Recipes

**Peanut Antioxidant Trail Mix**

**Ingredients**

- Peanuts, Raw, Redskin 1 cup
- Sea Salt 1 tsp.
- Peanut Oil as needed
- Crushed Red Pepper 1 Tbs.
- Dark Chocolate Chips ¾ cup
- Dried Blueberries ¾ cup

**For About 160 Calories**

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**An Ounce a Day... Keeps the Doctor Away**

The Peanut Institute is a non-profit organization that supports nutrition research and develops educational programs to encourage healthy lifestyles.

**For Further Information:**

The Peanut Institute

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Albany, GA 31708-0157

USA

TEL: 1-888-8PEANUT

FAX: 1-229-888-5150

www.peanut-institute.org

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References


25. Alper CM and Mattes RD. Dietary magnesium and C-reactive protein levels. Inflammation and decrease magnesium, play a role in the disease prevention process individually and collectively (6). These are powerful health effects that can result by simply adding a handful of peanuts (about an ounce) to your diet. One small change can have a significant outcome on disease risk. Epidemiological studies have shown that consuming about an ounce of peanuts or half a serving of peanut butter every day can cut heart disease risk by up to half and decrease diabetes risk by a quarter (1,2,3). One emerging hypothesis for this association is the influence that nut consumption has on inflammation in our bodies. For example, as we gain weight or eat certain inflammatory foods inflammation can occur and lead to the development of disease. Inflammation is now believed to be a major underling cause of many chronic diseases, including heart disease and diabetes, and studies are showing that consumption of certain foods including nuts such as peanuts may reduce inflammation and decrease markers of inflammation, such as C-reactive protein (4,5). Other studies suggest that many of the unique nutrients in peanuts, including unsaturated fats, fiber, antioxidants, arginine and magnesium, play a role in the disease prevention process individually and collectively (6). These are powerful health effects that can result by simply adding a handful of peanuts (about an ounce) to your diet.

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**One Small Change, Many Health Benefits**

One small change can have a significant outcome on disease risk. Epidemiological studies have shown that consuming about an ounce of peanuts or half a serving of peanut butter every day can cut heart disease risk by up to half and decrease diabetes risk by a quarter (1,2,3). One emerging hypothesis for this association is the influence that nut consumption has on inflammation in our bodies. For example, as we gain weight or eat certain inflammatory foods inflammation can occur and lead to the development of disease. Inflammation is now believed to be a major underlying cause of many chronic diseases, including heart disease and diabetes, and studies are showing that consumption of certain foods including nuts such as peanuts may reduce inflammation and decrease markers of inflammation, such as C-reactive protein (4,5). Other studies suggest that many of the unique nutrients in peanuts, including unsaturated fats, fiber, antioxidants, arginine and magnesium, play a role in the disease prevention process individually and collectively (6). These are powerful health effects that can result by simply adding a handful of peanuts (about an ounce) to your diet. One small change can have a significant outcome on disease risk. Epidemiological studies have shown that consuming about an ounce of peanuts or half a serving of peanut butter every day can cut heart disease risk by up to half and decrease diabetes risk by a quarter (1,2,3). One emerging hypothesis for this association is the influence that nut consumption has on inflammation in our bodies. For example, as we gain weight or eat certain inflammatory foods inflammation can occur and lead to the development of disease. Inflammation is now believed to be a major underlying cause of many chronic diseases, including heart disease and diabetes, and studies are showing that consumption of certain foods including nuts such as peanuts may reduce inflammation and decrease markers of inflammation, such as C-reactive protein (4,5). Other studies suggest that many of the unique nutrients in peanuts, including unsaturated fats, fiber, antioxidants, arginine and magnesium, play a role in the disease prevention process individually and collectively (6). These are powerful health effects that can result by simply adding a handful of peanuts (about an ounce) to your diet.
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“Scientific evidence suggests but does not prove that eating 1.5 ounces per day of most nuts, such as peanuts, as part of a diet low in saturated fat and cholesterol may reduce the risk of heart disease. [See nutrition information for fat content]” (7).

According the United States Department of Agriculture, 1.5 ounces of peanuts also offers a good and excellent source of fiber and protein, at more than 10% and 20% respectively of the Recommended Daily Allowance (RDA) (8).

Peanuts and peanut butter have been shown to keep you satisfied so you naturally reduce eating extra calories throughout the day and do not crave empty calories (9,10). A study conducted by Harvard researchers showed that twice as many people could stick to a weight loss diet and weight management plans that included peanuts and peanut butter (11). When you eat a handful of peanuts each day, you are feeding your body a rich source of plant protein, fiber, and nutrients that are thought to contribute to keeping you satisfied, helping to keep calories in check and manage weight.

Researchers conclude that what ultimately leads to successful weight loss is the ability to follow an eating pattern that is satisfying, accessible and affordable. Peanuts and peanut butter provide these characteristics in addition, to being nutrient-rich with great taste.

There actually is a right way and a wrong way to lose weight and maintain the loss. Your body will perform best and be more efficient when it gets the fuel that it needs, even as you try to manage your weight. A weight loss study conducted at Penn State fed either a low-fat diet or a moderate-fat diet that included peanuts, peanut butter, and peanut oil. Both the control and experimental groups lost weight, but only the group eating peanuts, peanut butter, and peanut oil were able to keep their blood triglycerides low during the weight maintenance period, showing that the foods you choose to eat while losing weight matter (12).

Peanuts and peanut butter are full of nutrients. Vitamins and minerals, including hard-to-get vitamin E, magnesium, and potassium, as well as bioactive components like resveratrol and phytosterols are packed into small peanut kernels, making them a healthy and critical addition to your snacks and meals. Peanut eaters consume more hard-to-get nutrients and have higher quality diets according to a study conducted by Penn State (15). The contribution of nutrients to the diet from peanuts is significant and can be important since reports resulting from the 2005 US Dietary Guidelines reported that adult’s and children’s intake of several nutrients, including magnesium, potassium, and vitamin E are poor, dubbing these as nutrients of concern (16).

The 2005 US Dietary Guidelines report advises most people “to choose meals and snacks that are high in nutrients but low to moderate in energy content.” (16). In other words, eating empty calories is not just contributing to extra weight, but can actually be harmful in the sense that our bodies need certain nutrients to perform at their best. The report states that “what you eat is just as important as how much you eat” and includes peanuts in the only food guide and eating plan that are presented in the report (16, 28).

An Ounce a Day . . . Keeps Extra Pounds At-Bay

An Ounce A Day. . . Keeps Nutrients in Play

Peanut eaters consume more hard-to-get nutrients and have higher quality diets

Boost Your Metabolism

Peanuts provide key nutrients that can help keep your metabolism at its best. What is more is that peanuts may help to stimulate your metabolism! Purdue University found that after eating peanuts regularly for 19 weeks, resting energy expenditure was 11% greater than at baseline (13).

Studies in adults and in children have shown that people who eat peanuts on a regular basis have lower body weights and lower Body Mass Index’s (BMI’s) (14,15). So, including peanuts or peanut butter as a nutritious addition to your diet can be done without guilt or breaking “the diet” bank, when eaten in the right portions. The recommended daily servings are a handful of peanuts (1-2 ounces depending on your size) or 2 tablespoons of peanut butter.

- **Good Source** (10%-19%+ RDA)
- **Excellent Source** (20%+ RDA)

<table>
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<tr>
<td><strong>polyunsaturated fatty acid</strong></td>
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**Fiber**

- Peanuts: 3.6 g
- Peanut butter: 3.6 g
- Peanut oil: 3.6 g

**Monounsaturated Fatty Acid**

- Peanuts: 4.5 g
- Peanut butter: 4.5 g
- Peanut oil: 4.5 g

**Polyunsaturated Fatty Acid**

- Peanuts: 4.5 g
- Peanut butter: 4.5 g
- Peanut oil: 4.5 g

**Triacylglycerol (mmol/L)**

- Peanuts: 1.25 mmol/L
- Peanut butter: 1.25 mmol/L
- Peanut oil: 1.25 mmol/L

**Vitamins and minerals, including hard-to-get nutrient**

- Magnesium, potassium, and vitamin E are poor, dubbing these as nutrients of concern (16).

**An Ounce a Day... Keeps Extra Pounds At-Bay**

Food and eating can be an enjoyable thing, often times too enjoyable. As waistlines expand and chronic diseases including heart disease and diabetes rise, more and more people are having to closely monitor their food intake, with the goal of losing weight. One difficulty with this is that certain health foods are often seen as bland, boring or unsatisfying.

Peanuts and peanut butter are full of nutrients. Vitamins and minerals, including hard-to-get vitamin E, magnesium, and potassium, as well as bioactive components like resveratrol and phytosterols are packed into small peanut kernels, making them a healthy and critical addition to your snacks and meals. Peanut eaters consume more hard-to-get nutrients and have higher quality diets according to a study conducted by Penn State (15). The contribution of nutrients to the diet from peanuts is significant and can be important since reports resulting from the 2005 US Dietary Guidelines reported that adult’s and children’s intake of several nutrients, including magnesium, potassium, and vitamin E are poor, dubbing these as nutrients of concern (16).

It is counterintuitive, but as people in the US are taking in more calories and putting on pounds, health professionals are realizing and research is showing that the population is lacking adequate intake of certain key nutrients for health (16-18). Interestingly, research is showing that people who consume less magnesium are more likely to have elevated inflammatory markers, and an increased risk of metabolic syndrome, insulin resistance, diabetes, and heart disease (19-27). A clinical study conducted at Purdue University showed that daily intake of peanuts significantly increased fiber, magnesium, folate, vitamin E, copper, and arginine (18). Blood levels of magnesium were also significantly elevated.

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---

**Good Source**
**Excellent Source**

<table>
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**Fiber**

*monounsaturated fatty acid
**polyunsaturated fatty acid

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**For About 160 Calories . . . . .**

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**RECIPE**

**Peanut Antioxidant Trail Mix**

**Ingredients**
- Peanuts
- Raw, Redskin Sea Salt
- 1 Tbs. Peanut Oil
- Crushed Red Pepper
- Dark Chocolate Chips
- ¾ cup Dried Blueberries

**Instructions**

1. Mix all well, spread out, and refrigerate.**

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**References**

27. Wu, et al. Inflammatory markers are lower in peanuts than in peanuts or pretzels, but pretzels and jelly beans