

"NUTRITION ATTRIBUTES & HEALTH EFFECTS OF PISTACHIOS"

highlights potential links between eating pistachios and many health benefits¹

Meet the powerful pistachio!



A new research review published in **THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NUTRITION** suggests that eating pistachios and other nuts does not cause weight gain or an increased risk of obesity. Including nuts into weight loss diets enhances palatability and so improves compliance, without compromising beneficial health effects. Given the nutritional attributes of pistachios it is easy to see how they can be a useful part of a balanced and varied diet and active lifestyle – essential for good health.



EYE HEALTH

Lutein and zeaxanthin (carotenoids) are responsible for pistachios' yellow & green hues and levels are **far higher than in other nuts**. High amounts of these carotenoids are found in the retina of the eye, where they are thought to have a role in protecting the tissues from phototoxic damage. This may be a factor important for reducing risk of age-related macular degeneration (vision loss).

Pistachios are a **source of riboflavin** (vitamin B2) and zinc which contribute to the maintenance of normal vision.



BONE HEALTH

Pistachios are **high in manganese & phosphorous** and a **source of protein, magnesium, zinc, vitamin K** all of which contribute to the maintenance of normal bones.



HEART HEALTH

Pistachios are **high in mono-unsaturated fats and unsaturated fats**. Replacing saturated fats with unsaturated fats in the diet contributes to the maintenance of normal blood cholesterol levels. Pistachios are also **high in thiamin** (vitamin B1) which contributes to normal function of the heart; and a **source of folate** which contributes to normal blood formation and homocysteine metabolism.



PHYTOPROTECTION

Pistachios are a **source of zinc, selenium, copper, manganese, riboflavin and vitamin E**, six nutrients that help protect cells from oxidative stress.

Carotenoids, including lutein and zeaxanthin found in large amounts in pistachios, have antioxidant properties and have been associated with a reduced risk of CVD and some types of cancer, although more research is needed.



WEIGHT

Pistachios are **high in fibre, a source of protein and unsaturated fats** and are energy dense yet have a low glycaemic index; These dietary factors increase satiety, thereby help to curb hunger pangs and increasing research suggests that these attributes may be why pistachios can be useful as part of a balanced, weight management diet. The act of shelling pistachios and keeping shells in sight, has also been shown to help limit consumption of the nuts.



PHYTOSTEROLS

Pistachios have the highest **phytosterol** content among tree nuts, providing 210mg per 100g. Plant sterols contribute to maintaining normal blood cholesterol levels, with the beneficial effect obtained when at least 0.8g sterols or stanols are consumed daily.



GLUCOSE CONTROL

Pistachios are **high in chromium** which contributes to normal macronutrient metabolism and the maintenance of normal blood glucose levels. Studies suggest pistachios may also help people with diabetes due to their high fibre and healthy fats and low glycaemic index. Pistachio nuts have a glycaemic index of less than 10. Consuming a portion of pistachios (56g) alongside high GI foods (white bread, rice and pasta) was shown to significantly reduce glycaemic response.²



OVERALL HEALTH

Studies show that people who regularly eat nuts, including pistachios, tend to have higher-quality diets. Not surprising given that pistachios are **high in fibre, chromium, potassium, copper, manganese, phosphorus, thiamin and vitamin B6**; they provide a source of protein, magnesium, iron, selenium, zinc, riboflavin, vitamin E & K & folate; and contain oleic acid, linoleic acid and plant sterols.



BLOOD PRESSURE

Pistachios are **high in potassium** which contributes to the maintenance of normal blood pressure.

Unsalted pistachios are very low in salt (sodium). Reducing consumption of sodium contributes to the maintenance of normal blood pressure.

This infographic is written for use by health professionals, with nutritionists and dietitians in mind and it is not intended for consumers.

References:

USDA Nutrient Database for Standard Reference, Release 27, 2014
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