

Natural Health Tips

Go Nuts About Nuts!

It takes just eight nuts a day to keep your arteries more flexible and your heart healthier.

Researchers at Barcelona's Hospital Clinico analyzed the effects of walnuts on people consuming even an unhealthy diet, rich in saturated animal fats. Their results showed the nuts helped reduce the inflammatory reaction in the arteries after meals rich in saturated fats. The benefit seemed to be even higher than the one offered by consuming olive oil.

This is not to suggest you consume unhealthy, fatty meals, but rather to encourage you to include nuts in your daily diet.

The Barcelona Hospital Clinico researchers focused on walnuts, but other nuts' qualities are not to be ignored. Almonds, Brazil nuts, cashews, pecans, macadamia nuts are all sources of significant "good" fats (see June's tip on good and bad fats) and are rich in protein, important minerals like calcium, magnesium, zinc, iron, selenium and potassium, as well as vitamin E and A. Seeds offer similar "gifts" to their consumers, especially pumpkin, sunflower and sesame seeds.

For a detailed profile of nuts and seeds, and the declaration of the winners for each nutrient provided, please return to the site next month. September 2008 will provide a "nuts and nutrients" table.

Two important notes before concluding:

One – To enjoy the true benefits of these nutrition wonders, nuts are to be consumed RAW and thoroughly chewed.

Two - Peanuts are NOT in the group of healthy nuts. The reasons for that are multiple, but the easiest to remember is that pea"nuts" are actually not nuts! They are legumes, have a different nutrient profile, are heavily sprayed with pesticides, can not be consumed raw and are among the most common allergens.