

Nutrition experts rank the 5 healthiest nuts and the one that stands above the rest



By Andrea Margolis, Fox News

Nuts are widely considered a **healthy food**, but not all varieties deliver the same nutritional benefits.

The snacks are best known for delivering **healthy fats, fiber and protein** in a compact, nutrient-rich package that's easy to eat on the go. Though they pack plenty of nutrients, nuts are often recommended in small portions only due to their high calorie content.

Fox News Digital reached out to nutrition experts to learn the top five healthiest nuts — and what makes each one worth adding to your **snack rotation**. See the list just below.

1. WALNUTS

Walnuts "lead the pack for cardiovascular and brain health," said Whitney Stuart, a Texas-based dietitian and diabetes educator at Whitniss Nutrition.

"They're the only nut with a significant source of ALA omega-3 fatty acids, which support inflammation reduction and cognitive function," she told Fox News Digital.

Mackenzie Burgess, a Los Angeles-based registered dietitian nutritionist and recipe developer at Cheerful Choices, also expanded on the **benefits of walnuts**, even citing a recent study that measured their positive effects on sleep quality.

"I love adding a handful to **oatmeal or yogurt** or even enjoying them as an after-dinner snack for that extra sleep benefit," she said.

2. PISTACHIOS

Pistachios offer "one of the **most balanced nutrition profiles** of any nut," said Amy Goodson, a registered dietitian based in Dallas. The small-but-mighty nuts, Goodson told Fox News Digital, are "rich in potassium and **antioxidants like lutein and zeaxanthin**, which support eye health.

"Plus, because they're often eaten in the shell, they can naturally help with portion control," she added. Stuart said pistachios are underrated.

"Research consistently shows they improve postprandial blood sugar response and offer one of the highest protein counts per serving of any nut," Stuart said.

3. ALMONDS

Almonds are a go-to choice for blood sugar management, Stuart noted.

"Their combination of fiber, magnesium and healthy fat slows glucose absorption and supports insulin sensitivity," she said. Goodson described almonds as "a fiber powerhouse." These nuts are "particularly rich in soluble fiber, which supports **heart health** by helping lower LDL cholesterol," she said.

"They're also packed with vitamin E, an antioxidant that supports skin health and immune function. Their crunch and versatility make them an easy addition to snacks **and meals**."

4. BRAZIL NUTS

Though they may be less popular than other varieties, Brazil nuts offer significant health benefits. Their main appeal, said Goodson, comes down to one thing: selenium.

"Just one [Brazil] nut per day can meet your daily selenium needs, which plays a critical role in thyroid function, immune health and antioxidant defense," she added.

"Because they're so concentrated, moderation is important."

5. CASHEWS

The standout nutrients in cashews are magnesium and zinc, Burgess said.

These two minerals "play a key role in immune function, bone health and energy metabolism."

"They also provide heart-healthy monounsaturated fats similar to those found in olive oil," she said, suggesting eating them alone or turning them into cashew butter.

"Research suggests cashew consumption may support healthy blood pressure levels and cardiovascular health," Burgess added.