



10 SWEET AND SALTY SNACKS

THAT LOWER
BLOOD SUGAR

10 Sweet & Salty Snacks That Lower Blood Sugar

If you want to sustain optimal health, prevent disease, stay feeling your best, and effortlessly control your body weight, you need to be paying attention to your blood sugar levels.

Too many people put all the focus on calorie counting and keeping their macronutrients in check. They're counting carbs, fats, and proteins thinking that as long as they reach their daily targets, they're doing all right.

And they very well may be... (there are four periods in the ellipses; there should only be three. Also need to insert a space after the ellipses.) Choose the wrong foods, however, and you'll see a completely different story being told.



Remember, you can 'hit your macros' eating foods like pizza, potato chips, and licorice candy. Is that healthy?

Clearly not!

But wait – if someone hits their macros, aren't they reaching their goals?

You must be paying attention to the type of foods you put into your body, especially their nutritional density. If they are nutrient-dense foods such as fruits and vegetables, you'll be supplying your body with the key micronutrients it needs for optimal functioning. Likewise, you'll also get an array of antioxidants, which are required if you want to avoid damage from free radicals.

Simply put, *the foods you eat matter*. Think about how food will influence your body after it's eaten, and this will open up a world of information about what you want to put into your body each day.



Always remember: there are certain foods that can contribute to cancer, heart disease, and diabetes; other foods can prevent these life-threatening diseases.

Which do you want to be eating?

The choice is yours.

To help you start off on the right foot, we've put together a list of the top 10 snack-based foods that you should be including in

your meal plan. All of these foods are going to help control your blood sugar levels, thus sidestepping diabetes and helping to ensure that you aren't suffering from the extreme energy spikes and crashes that are typically associated with a diet rich in simple sugars.

These snacks are easy to eat at any point during the day, and most can be eaten on their own!

However, to help make things more interesting for you, we've put together a few of our favorite recipes that include these foods as well. This way, there is no excuse for *not* putting them to action in your meal plan.

Ready? Here's your snack line-up.

Cashews

The first delicious food that gets overlooked too often in most people's diet is the cashew. Perhaps you know that nuts are a great addition to your diet, but when you do choose nuts, you choose almonds. Or maybe you usually opt for peanut butter, not knowing that peanuts are actually legumes, not nuts – and that you should be avoiding them!



While there's nothing wrong with almonds, consider trading them for cashews once in awhile. Cashews really shine when you look at their overall fat profile – not only do they tend to have a lower fat content than other nuts, but 82% of their fat content comes from unsaturated fatty acids.

Additionally, 66% of those unsaturated fatty acids are the monounsaturated kind – the same ultra-heart-healthy fat found in olive oil.

According to a study published in the *Open Orthopaedics Journal*,¹ cashews may also help maintain bone density and lower the risk of broken bones. This is because cashews are an excellent source of magnesium, and oft-overlooked mineral that is crucial for optimal bone health. While most people think of calcium as the all-star component for joint and bone health, the key is actually a combination of magnesium and calcium working together.

Over 60% of the magnesium content in your body is found in your bones, helping to give your skeletal system its physical structure.

If you aren't getting enough magnesium from your daily diet, your body will use up the stored magnesium in your bones, leaving you with weaker and more brittle bone structures.

Individuals who are magnesium-deficient are also more prone to suffering from high blood pressure and muscle spasms, making it a must for active individuals.

The complete nutritional profile for one ounce of cashews is:

Calories: 156 calories

Total Fat: 12.4 grams

Saturated Fat: 2.2 grams

Carbs: 8.6 grams

Dietary Fiber: 0.9 grams

Sugar: 1.7 grams

Protein: 5.2 grams



All in all, cashews are a very nutrient-balanced food, making it a great snack all on its own. However, keep in mind that because these nuts are so calorie-dense, you should be sure to exercise portion control.

Guacamole

Next up on the list of terrific foods you can feel good about putting in your body is guacamole. While you likely won't be eating this snack entirely on its own (unless you really love your guacamole!), it's perfect for serving with an assortment of fresh, raw vegetables and getting your overall fruit and vegetable intake up!



Another option to consider is a dollop on the side of your primary protein at a meal – just be sure to steer clear of those pita chips! You don't want to be putting those simple carbs into your body, as it simply isn't good for your long-term health.

Getting back to the guacamole: what makes this food such a great option are the avocados its made from. Avocados – which are actually a fruit and not a vegetable – are unique because they offer a very high fat content while keeping sugar low.

This also means that avocados do an excellent job at controlling blood sugar levels.

In addition to being rich in heart-healthy monounsaturated fats, avocados are also a stand-out source of Vitamin E as well. Vitamin E is a powerful antioxidant that helps to combat free radical damage in the body, and it can also play a role in warding off conditions such as cancer and heart disease. One study published in the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* noted that when subjects had a diet rich in Vitamin E, their risk of cancer was 1.5x lower than those who did not.²

Vitamin E is also a key, fat-soluble vitamin that helps keep your hair, skin, and nails looking their best. If you're interested in putting your best, youngest-looking foot forward, you'll want to ensure that you're including avocado in your diet plan.

Avocados earn top marks for providing optimal blood glucose control thanks to their 10 grams of dietary fiber per one cup serving, along with a 7-carbon sugar molecule called mannoheptulose. This sugar is different from most other sugars in that it can actually help suppress insulin secretion.³

Here's an interesting tip for selecting avocados: If you're watching your weight and want to keep overall fat content down, opt for larger-sized selections, which will generally have fewer calories and fat per ounce. On the flip side, if you want those healthy fats, opt for a smaller avocado. They tend to be oilier and higher in fat fat than their larger counterparts.

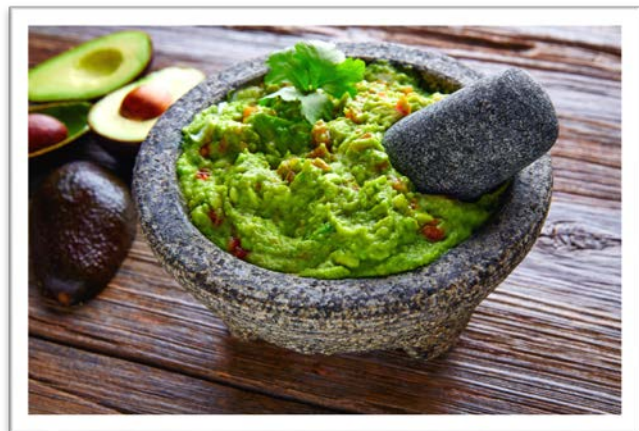


While the nutritional stats of guacamole will vary based on how you prepare it, the nutritional stats for your average 7.1 oz. avocado are:

Calories: 322
Total Fat: 29.5 grams
 Saturated Fat: 4.3 grams
Carbs: 17.1 grams
 Dietary Fiber: 13.5 grams
 Sugar: 1.3 grams
Protein: 4 grams

It's usually best if you focus on preparing your own guacamole as often as possible – that way, you always know exactly what's going into it. Here is a fantastic recipe that keeps the high level of nutrition intact without sacrificing taste.

3 medium avocados
1 firm tomato, finely diced
½ onion, finely diced
¼ red pepper, finely diced
½ cup chopped cilantro
2 tbsp. fresh lemon juice
1 clove minced garlic
salt and pepper to taste



Remove the pit and core the avocado. Mash the avocado and then combine with all the other ingredients until well blended. Serve or store in the fridge.

Olives

Another great food on the list of foods to add to your blood sugar controlling meal plan is the olive. Chances are, you already know just how powerful olive oil is – and since olive oil comes from olives, you'll get all the same great benefits from consuming olives in their original form.



Olives are an excellent source of monounsaturated fats and anti-inflammatory benefits. Because so many of today's most prominent diseases are caused by inflammation, the more you can control it, the healthier you'll be. In fact, a study published in *Inflammation Research* illustrated how subjects who consumed more olives in their diet – as opposed to oils from other fat sources – showed lower overall rates of inflammation.⁴

Olives also contain the phytonutrient hydroxytyrosol, which has been linked to the prevention of certain types of cancer. Additionally, it may also help to reduce age-related bone loss, which can help with controlling osteoporosis.

Another interesting fact to note is that one cup of olives can provide 25% of your total daily iron intake. Iron is a critical mineral for the body because it is necessary for energy production. If you're running low on iron, you'll quickly become fatigued during regular exercise, and you may notice you have much lower endurance levels than you normally do.

Iron-deficiency anemia can also cause hair loss and a general sense of feeling unwell, but this can easily be remedied by adding more iron to your diet through either food or supplements.

It appears as though olives may also offer great support against allergies as well. On a cellular level, they function as antihistamines, which can help to lessen a cell's overall histamine response. This histamine response is what triggers an overall

allergy process, so olives may offer powerful benefits for those dealing with severe allergies.

You may think that olives are a high-calorie food due to their role in creating olive oil – an item that is, in fact, very high in calories. However, this is not the case.



The nutritional stats for a 100-gram serving (about ¼ cup) of olives are as follows:

Calories: 115
Total Fat: 10.7 grams
 Saturated Fat: 1.42 grams
Carbs: 6.3 grams
 Dietary Fiber: 3.2 grams
 Sugar: 0 grams
Protein: 0.8 grams

Most people aren't so fond of eating olives raw on their own, but in the salsa recipe below, they'll taste fantastic. Try it if you want to start incorporating more olives into your diet plan.

- 1 ¼ pounds diced tomatoes
- ¼ cup sliced green olives
- 1 bunch sliced green onions
- 1 tbsp. red wine vinegar
- 2 tsp. minced oregano
- ¼ tsp. salt
- ¼ tsp. pepper

Mix all the ingredients together and let stand for 5-10 minutes prior to serving to allow flavors to blend.



Sweet Potatoes

If you tend to fear all starchy carbs, *don't*. While you certainly don't want to be filling your body with processed, white flour-based carbohydrates, there are a few varieties of complex carbohydrates that are a-okay to include in a healthy diet plan.

Sweet potatoes are one of them. Once you get used to sweet potatoes, you may find that you actually prefer their gentle sweetness to plain white potatoes.



There are many ways to prepare sweet potatoes – you can bake them, fry them in coconut oil, mash them, or create sweet potato chips using the recipe below, which makes for a terrific snack any day of the week.

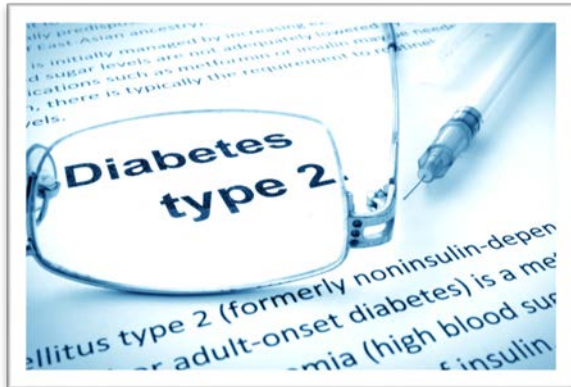
Sweet potatoes are a very rich source of beta-carotene, which is typical of all orange-flesh colored vegetables. Beta-carotene is the precursor to Vitamin A as well as a great nutrient for maintaining healthy skin and eyes.

It should also be noted that those who don't get enough beta-carotene in their diet may be at higher risk for artery disease, stroke, macular degeneration, and other age-related diseases.

If you really want to reap maximum benefits from the beta-carotene found in sweet potatoes, it's suggested that you serve them with a touch of fat – just 3-5 grams should do it. This will help with the absorption of the beta-carotene, ensuring you reap maximum benefits. Drizzling a little olive oil on your sweet potatoes before baking them will do the trick nicely – plus, this will enhance the taste as well.

Sweet potatoes also offer excellent anti-inflammatory benefits, and could help to lower inflammation-related health conditions.

Finally, sweet potatoes are also well-regarded for their ability to help control blood sugar levels. While there are natural sugars in sweet potatoes (which is what gives the sweet potato that naturally sweet taste), these sugars aren't going to impact your blood glucose level like regular sugar would. In fact, even though their GI rating is "medium," the high dose of dietary fiber found in sweet potatoes means they help to stabilize blood sugar, ensure the slow release of energy into the bloodstream, and provide a protective element against diabetes.⁶



Sweet potatoes also appear to release adiponectin into the blood of those suffering from Type 2 diabetes. Because this hormone helps to regulate insulin, sweet potatoes may actually help to boost insulin sensitivity and improve diabetic symptoms.

Another interesting fact: If sweet potatoes are cooked, cooled, and then eaten while still cool, some of their normal starch converts to what's known as *resistant starch*, which is able to partially pass through the body without being absorbed.⁵ Therefore, you may actually be netting fewer calories when eating cooled sweet potatoes than freshly baked ones.

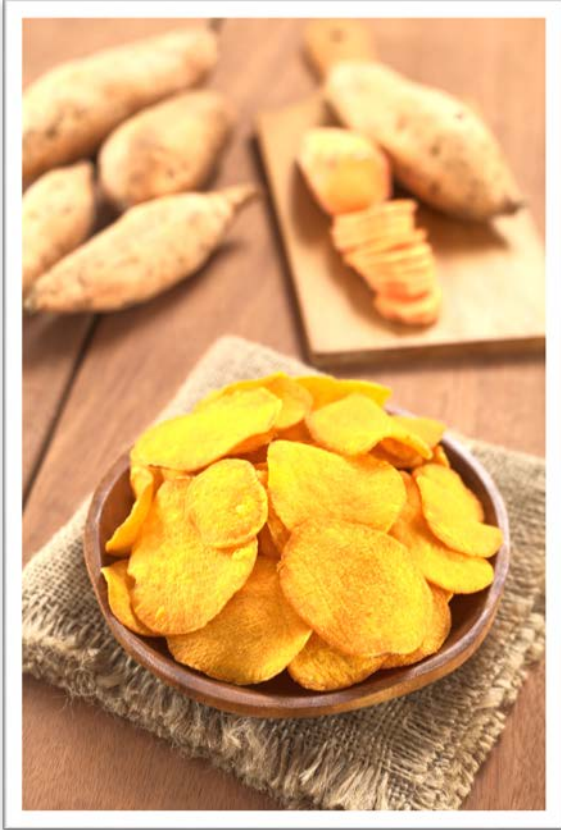
Keep these things in mind if your primary goal is to lose weight – sweet potatoes may just help you accomplish that goal a bit more easily.

The nutritional profile for one cup of baked sweet potatoes is as follows:

Calories: 180
Total Fat: 0.3 grams
 Saturated Fat: 0.1 grams
Carbs: 41.4 grams
 Dietary Fiber: 6.6 grams
 Sugar: 16.9 grams
Protein: 4 grams



If you bake a large batch of sweet potatoes, they'll easily keep for a few days in the fridge and will be ready to grab when you need a meal. Or, try this sweet potato chip recipe for a quick and tasty way to get your sweet potatoes in.



2 large sweet potatoes
2 tbsp. olive oil
¼ tsp. sea salt
¼ tsp. cinnamon (optional)

Preheat the oven to 250 degrees and make sure you have one rack in the center position of the oven. Slice your sweet potatoes as thin as possible, trying to keep them uniform. If one part is thin and the other is thick, they won't bake up evenly.

Once sliced, coat with some olive oil and then sprinkle salt and cinnamon on if desired.

Lay out on a single layer baking sheet, making sure to not overlap. Cook for two hours, flipping after one hour is up. Remove them from the oven and then let them stand for about 10 minutes prior to eating. Serve immediately.

Raspberries

Now it's time for some more fruit! Don't fear fruit because of its sugar content. Too many people think they need to shun fruit entirely when watching their blood sugar levels, but this is not necessarily the case.



The great thing about fruit is that it comes in a delicious little package that's full of fiber and antioxidants, so it won't impact your blood sugar nearly as much as a handful of Skittles would.

Of all the fruits to eat, berries are one of the best choices, both for their antioxidant levels and sugar content. Going even further, the raspberry has the lowest sugar content and actually has more fiber than it does sugar. This makes it ideal for blood glucose control.⁷

Note that a berry's level of antioxidants grows as it ripens, so for best results, you'll want to eat raspberries at their ripest stage.

The high dose of antioxidants and anti-inflammatory phytonutrients raspberries provide can help combat a number of cancers, including breast cancer, cervical cancer, colon cancer, esophageal cancer, and prostate cancer.⁸

Because raspberries are able to help reduce the overall level of inflammation in the body, they're also great for helping to ward off conditions such as Type 2 diabetes, hypertension, and atherosclerosis.

Of course, thank to their high fiber content, raspberries will also be ideal for helping to reduce cholesterol levels, and they may even assist with keep heart disease risk factors in check.

Per one cup of raspberries you are going to take in:

Calories: 64

Total Fat: 0.8 grams

Saturated Fat: less than 0.1 gram

Carbs: 14.7 grams

Dietary Fiber: 8 grams

Sugar: 5.4 grams

Protein: 1.5 grams



As you can see, it really doesn't get much better than that. Raspberries are low in calories, so they make for an easy add to just about any diet plan. Plus, with such a high amount of fiber, you can be sure they'll fill you up in a hurry.

Raspberries are an excellent treat when eaten all on their own. However, if you prefer, you can also try this delicious raspberry smoothie, which is the perfect stand-in for any milkshake craving you may be dealing with.



- 1 cup frozen raspberries
- 1 cup unsweetened almond milk
- ¼ mashed avocado
- ½ scoop whey protein powder
- 2-3 ice cubes

Place all ingredients in a blender and pulse blend until desired consistency is reached.

Sunflower Seeds

Time to turn to a seed for something different. While earlier we spoke about the health benefits and blood glucose stabilization powers that nuts offer, don't overlook the benefits of seeds.

Seeds are also a terrific source of healthy fats and are a great addition to any diet plan. There are also an endless number of ways you can include these into your menu, whether it's eating them in a homemade trail mix, adding them to baked goods such as muffins or bars, or sprinkling them over the top of your salad.



One seed in particular to take note of are sunflower seeds. This seed is an excellent source of Vitamin E, noted earlier for its benefits as a fat-soluble way to keep your hair, skin, and nails healthy. It's also an antioxidant in the body, important for neutralizing free radicals that would otherwise cause great damage to your tissues and cells.

Those who consume sufficient Vitamin E on a regular basis tend to show lower overall rates of inflammation and may notice reduce symptoms of asthma, osteoarthritis, and circulatory conditions.⁹

Vitamin E also offers excellent heart-health benefits, as it helps to prevent free radicals from oxidizing cholesterol. This in turn helps to prevent the process of plaque build-up on the artery walls, reducing your risk for heart attack and stroke.

As sunflower seeds are also a terrific source of magnesium, they're also excellent for helping to manage blood pressure, lower your risk of heart attack and stroke, and keep nerve and muscle contractions under control.

Per quarter cup serving of sunflower seeds, you'll take in:

Calories: 204 calories

Total Fat: 17.8 grams of fat

Saturated Fat: 1.9 grams of saturated fat

Carbs: 6.8 grams

Dietary Fiber: 3.8 grams

Sugar: 0.9 grams

Protein: 8.2 grams



As long as you keep your serving size in check and are sure not to overdo your intake of this seed, you can certainly add this to your healthy eating diet plan.

Try this delicious salad recipe any time you want a quick snack or even a light meal.



- 2 cups spinach leaves
- ¼ sliced cucumber
- ½ cup blueberries
- 2 tbsp. sunflower seeds
- 2 tbsp. slivered almonds
- 1 tbsp. olive oil
- 1 tbsp. vinegar
- 1 tbsp. honey
- 3 oz. pre-grilled chicken (optional)

Mix together the olive oil, vinegar, and honey to form dressing. Toss together all the ingredients and then drizzle dressing on top. Toss once before serving.

Dried Unsweetened Coconut Flakes

The benefits of coconut cannot be touted enough. While it is a major source of saturated fat in a diet, coconut fat is unlike most saturated fats because it is a medium-chain triglyceride (MCT). This fat acts differently in the body, as it is a usable source of energy that will help to power you through your day without trouble.



While most dietary fat takes a long time to digest and break down in the body (thus a long time to provide you with usable energy), this is not the case for MCT's. This also makes them an excellent alternative for anyone who is currently cutting back on their carbohydrate intake.

Additionally, unlike saturated fat, medium-chain triglycerides are actually heart-healthy fats that can help to lower your overall risk of heart disease and stroke. This makes them one fat you can feel great about eating.

Coconuts are an excellent food for helping to enhance your overall immune health, strengthening your ability to combat disease and illness. Those who consume coconut fat on a regular basis tend to fall ill less often.¹⁰

Another interesting thing about coconut fat is that it's a highly metabolically active food. Meaning, as you take it in, you'll expend more energy simply breaking it down than you would with other sources of fat. This means you *net* fewer calories overall, making it a very weight loss friendly food. The thermic effect of food value (the percentage of calories burned through digestion) is set to around 15% for MCT's, whereas most fats are set to just 2%.¹¹ This can add up over time and give you an edge on fat loss.

Another big benefit of coconut fat is that it can help to kill harmful microorganisms. Around 50% of the fatty acids found in coconut fat are in the form of 12-carbon Lauric acid, which helps to kill harmful bacteria, viruses, and fungi.

Many people actually use coconut oil as a cleaner for this reason, so by eating coconut, you can help to keep your body disease-free.

Unsweetened coconut flakes are also great, as they are easy to use in recipes and don't contain any added sugar. If you'd prefer to eat most of your daily fat rather than ingesting it in oil form, you'll find this is an excellent way to reap the benefits of coconut in your diet plan.

Per two tablespoon serving of dried unsweetened coconut flakes, you'll take in:

Calories: 100

Total Fat: 10 grams

Saturated Fat: 9 grams

Carbs: 4 grams

Dietary Fiber: 2 grams

Sugar: 1 gram

Protein: 1 gram

Not sure how to use your coconut flakes? Try this delicious cookie recipe.

2 egg whites

2 cups unsweetened shredded coconut

¼ cup honey

½ cup whole almonds, chopped

1 tsp. pure vanilla extract

1 tsp. cinnamon

2 squares 90% pure dark chocolate, broken into tiny pieces



Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F. Combine together the honey and egg whites and then add the almonds, shredded coconut, vanilla, and cinnamon into the bowl.

Drop by spoonful onto a lined cookie sheet and then press tiny bits of chocolate into the top. Bake for about 12 minutes or until golden.

Smoked Salmon

If you want a fast source of protein on the go, look no further than smoked salmon. This delicious way to serve up one of the healthiest fish varieties out there is also easily transportable, so it's perfect for those days when you hardly have a moment to sit down and prepare your meals.



Salmon is a very rich source of omega-3 fatty acids, which is a nutrient that most of us are not getting enough of in today's world. Omega-3 fatty acids have been proven to help combat heart disease,¹³ lower cholesterol levels, and also help to manage diabetes by increasing insulin sensitivity.¹⁴

Additionally, omega-3 fatty acids are also imperative for maintaining optimal brain health as well. Those who aren't getting enough of this critical omega-3 fatty acid in to their day are more likely to suffer from depression as well as age-related cognitive decline.¹² Don't overlook the importance of brain health – if you don't tend to it now, you might reach a point where it's too late.

The omega-3 fatty acids found in salmon are also good for lowering inflammation in the body, allowing you to better manage any condition linked to this state, such as Alzheimer's diabetes, and arthritis.

Finally, salmon is also an excellent source of lean protein, which will help you rebuild lean body tissue, keeping you feeling strong for years to come. Most people generally don't have a problem getting in enough protein with the meals they eat, but when it comes to the snacks they're serving on a regular basis, it becomes much harder. Smoked salmon may just help you get your needs met.



While the calorie content of smoked salmon will vary slightly based on the variety you purchase, generally speaking, per 3 oz. serving, you'll take in:

Calories: 164

Total Fat: 7.5 grams

Saturated Fat: 1.5 grams

Carbs: 6 grams

Dietary Fiber: 0 grams

Sugar: 6 grams

Protein: 19.4 grams

You may be able to find a smoked salmon variety that contains less sugar depending on the smoking process, so shop around and find one that's right for you.

Almonds

Now it's time to revisit another great nut that we mentioned earlier – almonds. Almonds make for a quick and appealing snack for many people due to their mild, pleasant taste.

Ground almond flour is also an excellent alternative to white flour in many baking recipes. If you love bread, cookies, and muffins, you are sure to find lower-carb varieties that call for almond flour instead.



Almonds are an excellent source of unsaturated fat that's great for keeping your heart in top shape. This nut provides you with a wealth of monounsaturated fats, which will lower cholesterol and help to decrease your chances of heart disease, as was shown by research published in the *American Institute of Nutrition*.¹⁵

As almonds are also a rich source of Vitamin E, they can act as a powerful antioxidant in the body. In this capacity, almonds can further lower bad cholesterol and ensure that you are managing heart health optimally.

For those suffering from high blood pressure,¹⁶ almonds may actually be the perfect food. Not only are they low in sodium, but they're high in both potassium and magnesium.

Both of these minerals help with the regulation of blood pressure levels and can help you keep your own levels in a healthy place.

Potassium is also required for optimal nerve transmissions, so getting enough in your daily diet will be critical to you feeling your best.

Almonds also contain more protein than many other nuts, so if you are struggling to achieve your daily protein intake, you may want to consider adding them to your diet.

Finally, studies show that almonds and other nuts may help to enhance weight loss, as the body may not absorb all the calories found in them – therefore netting you less overall energy.¹⁷ While this doesn't mean you should eat almonds by the handful, if you are seeking weight loss, it does mean you may want to give almonds some extra consideration.



Per ounce of almonds, you'll take in:

Calories: 164
Total Fat: 14.4 grams
Saturated Fat: 1.1 grams
Carbs: 5.6 grams
Dietary Fiber: 3.4 grams
Sugar: 1.4 grams
Protein: 6 grams

Almonds, like other nuts, are great taken in on their own. Or, try this almond flour cookie recipe, which incorporates both almond flour and almond butter.

2 scoops chocolate whey protein powder
2 tbsp. almond flour
 $\frac{3}{4}$ cup almond butter
1 whole egg

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Mix all ingredients together and then form into bite sized cookies. Note you can add any 'fix-ins' as desired – other nuts, coconut, etc.

Bake for 9 minutes and serve immediately.

Apples

Finally, the last food on our list that earns top marks for helping you control blood sugar levels is the apple. Because they're available in so many different varieties, you're sure to find at least one kind of apple that you enjoy.



Apples are fiber powerhouses and contain a certain type of fiber called pectin,¹⁸ which has been shown to offer excellent appetite-reduction benefits. Because of this, eating an apple an hour before a meal could potentially help you take in fewer calories overall, thus assisting with the weight-loss process.

Apples also contain polyphenols, which can help prevent spikes in blood sugar levels, thus giving you superior blood glucose control. So even though this food is one that does contain a relatively high overall sugar content, don't fear it. One apple a day can certainly be a part of a healthy eating plan.

When eating an apple, be sure that you are eating both the skin and the flesh, as the skin is where most of the fiber is found.

Apples are also excellent at helping to improve heart health, and including them in your diet will bring down total LDL levels as well as total cholesterol.



Per medium apple (7 oz.), you'll take in:

Calories: 93 calories

Total Fat: 0.3 grams of fat

Saturated Fat: 0.1 grams of saturated fat

Carbs: 24.7 grams of carbs

Dietary Fiber: 4.3 grams of fiber

Sugar: 18.6 grams of sugar

Protein: 0.5 grams of protein

To create the perfect easy, apple-based snack, simply grab an apple and pair it with a little almond or cashew butter (both of which are also on this list!). You'll be all set to go with a perfect blood sugar-stabilizing snack that will tide you over until your next meal.



Conclusion

So there you have a closer look at 10 great foods that should all become a part of your diet plan. Make sure that you are taking a good look at what you're eating on a day-to-day basis, and ensure that these 10 foods are in your plan regularly.

Eat right and you will notice a difference – both inside and out of your body.



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