



Nuts in schools

A resource for school teachers, management and canteens.

Nuts are natural power-packs of nutrients like vitamins, minerals, antioxidants, healthy fats, protein and fibre, which help children grow, develop and learn. Examples of nuts include almonds, Brazil nuts, cashews, chestnuts, hazelnuts, macadamias, pecans, pine nuts, pistachios and walnuts. Peanuts are technically a legume, but they are commonly referred to as a nut as they have a similar nutritional composition.

A 30g serve of nuts is a small handful, or approximately:

- 30 pistachio kernels
- 20 almonds or hazelnuts
- 15 cashews, pecans or macadamias
- 9-10 Brazil nuts or walnuts
- 4 chestnuts



And contains around

- 36% of a child's daily vitamin E requirement
- 13% of a child's daily fibre requirement
- 4g protein

Plus

- B-group vitamins, calcium, iron, zinc, potassium and magnesium

Regularly eating nuts as part of an overall healthy diet can help to reduce cholesterol, regulate blood pressure, reducing the risk of diabetes and heart disease, maintain regular bowel movements and even support bone health!

Did you know?

Nuts are a fun and filling snack for kids, as they're less likely to fill up on other foods later on!

Nuts in school canteens

Plain or dry-roasted nuts are rated **GREEN** according to the *National Healthy School Canteens Guidelines*, which means they are a nutritious food that should be on the canteen menu every day (if your school allows them – see next page). Nuts with added salt or sugar should be avoided as they could be rated **AMBER** or even **RED** in some cases.

Nuts can be sold as a cheap and healthy snack, or try the following to add nuts to your school canteen menu:

- almonds or cashews in a stir fry
- roast chestnuts, pistachios or pine nuts added to a salad
- roasted, chopped hazelnuts sprinkled over soup
- crushed pecans or walnuts added to low-fat yoghurt with fruit
- crushed macadamias as a crust for chicken or fish
- sprinkled over muesli, porridge or a wholegrain breakfast cereal
- 100% nut spreads on toast or as a sandwich filling or in celery sticks



Visit www.nutsforlife.com.au or www.nutritionaustralia.org

for more ideas and a selection of nutritious recipes to include nuts in your school canteen menu.

Nuts and allergies

Peanuts and tree nuts can cause allergic reactions in some children.

Blanket food bans or attempts to totally eliminate food allergens in schools are not recommended by the Australasian Society of Clinical Immunology and Allergy (ASCIA). Instead, schools are encouraged to have a broad management plan in place, which includes education for students, staff training, strategies to reduce exposure and emergency response plans.

Visit www.allergy.org.au for ASCIA's guidelines and resources for the prevention of anaphylaxis in schools, pre-schools and childcare.



If your school chooses to have a nut free policy the following nuts/nut products may need to be avoided:

- Almonds/ almond butter
- Brazil nuts
- Cashews/ cashew paste
- Chestnuts/ ground meal
- Hazelnuts/ ground meal
- Macadamias
- Mixed nuts
- Peanuts, peanut butter/paste, peanut flour, peanut oil
- Pecans
- Pine nuts
- Pistachio nuts
- Walnuts
- Marzipan (almond)
- Nutella spread (hazelnut)
- Praline, Baci (hazelnut)
- Arachis (peanut)
- Rhen flakes (peanut)
- Satay sauce (peanut)

Foods commonly containing nuts include:

- Textured or hydrolysed vegetable protein
- Friands and flourless cakes (often contain almond meal)
- Flavoured cheeses (fruit and nut, walnut)
- Peanut and satay sauce (peanut based)
- Nut filled chocolates (can be peanut or other nuts)
- Baklava, Greek pastry (walnut or peanut)
- Marzipan icing, confectionery or cake decorations (usually almond based)
- Praline, fine nut (usually hazelnut) product added to desserts and chocolates
- Nut biscuits such as Amaretti, macaroons, Florentines (almond)
- Crushed nuts on top of desserts e.g. cakes, fruit buns, ice cream
- Breakfast cereals
- Muesli bars and health bars
- Energy mixes or trail mix
- Fruit crumble mix
- Christmas cakes and puddings
- Nougat and fudge
- Pesto
- Salad dressings
- Fruit cake icing (marzipan)
- Waldorf salad (walnuts)
- Asian style meals
- Worcestershire sauce

* Adapted from *Nut allergy*, Healthy Eating Advisory Service, State Government of Victoria, 2014, <http://heas.healthytogether.vic.gov.au>

Packaged foods that contain nuts must state this on the label. You can also look for the statement 'May contain traces of nuts' which indicates there's a possibility of cross-contamination during the manufacturing process.

See our corresponding fact sheet 'Nuts, health and kids' for a version of this information for parents and view the Nuts for Life Nut and Allergy fact sheet at www.nutsforlife.com.au



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