

What kind of nuts?

Who doesn't love to munch on nuts? Nuts are nutrient and calorie-rich and can be very good for you in moderation. But some nuts are just plain healthier than others.

A recent study has found that adding almonds to your diet can reduce the risk of heart disease by keeping blood vessels healthy.

The study was led by Dr. Helen Griffiths, Professor in Biomedical Sciences and Executive Dean of the School of Life and Health Sciences at Aston University in Birmingham, UK. Researchers tested the effects of a short-term almond-enriched diet on healthy young and middle-aged men and on a group of young men with cardiovascular risk factors including high blood pressure or being overweight.

A control group ate what they normally would, while another group consumed snacks of 50g (just under two ounces) of almonds a day for one month.

At the end of the study period, the group eating an almond-enriched diet had higher levels of antioxidants in their bloodstream, improved blood flow, and lower blood pressure, potentially reducing their risk of heart disease.

Not too shabby!

Almonds contain a range of beneficial substances such as vitamin E and healthy fats, fiber, and flavonoids.

Almonds come in many forms, the best being organic and raw, but lightly roasted almonds are also good. Almond milk is also beneficial but read the label to check for unhealthy additives including sugar. Eating whole nuts provides a lot more fiber than almond milk.