

Go nuts over nuts

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(HealthDay)—Nuts are a delicious food to enjoy year-round, adding a richer taste to many of your favorite dishes. High in protein, fiber and essential minerals, nuts also contain healthy mono- and polyunsaturated

fats that help fight inflammation.

Nuts are natural hunger-busters, but pay attention to your portion size. A snack of 10 to 12 peanuts, walnuts, pistachios or hazelnuts clocks in at about 100 calories.

Toasting nuts brings out their flavor and improves their texture. Simply place a handful of nuts in a dry, small skillet over medium-low heat. Cook two to three minutes, transfer to a cutting board, and chop or use whole. You can also bake nuts in a preheated 350-degree oven for eight to 10 minutes. For hazelnuts and pistachios, transfer to a dry dish towel and rub the toasted nuts to remove their skins, which may be bitter.

Chopped or ground nuts are also a healthier alternative to breadcrumbs. Here's a tasty way to use them with fish.

Pistachio-Crusted Salmon

- 2 4-ounce salmon fillets, skin on
- 2 tablespoons Dijon mustard
- 3 tablespoons chopped pistachios
- Olive oil cooking spray

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Place salmon in a baking dish, skin side down. Spread mustard over the surface of the salmon, then top with chopped nuts and spritz lightly with cooking spray. Tent loosely with [aluminum foil](#) and bake eight to 10 minutes or until the salmon is still pink in the center but no longer translucent.

Yield: 2 servings

More information: The Linus Pauling Institute has more on [the benefits of nuts](#) plus a calorie chart to help you fit them into your diet.

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