

Nuts could be the next best thing when it comes to weight loss, research suggests

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New research from the University of South Australia shows that including nuts in calorie-controlled weight loss diets does not hinder weight loss, and instead may have the opposite effect. The work is

[published](#) in the journal *Nutrition Research Reviews*.

Analyzing the findings of seven randomized controlled trials that assessed weight changes and glycemic control in energy-restrictive (ER) diets, researchers found that none of the studies produced an adverse effect to weight loss when nuts were included as part of the [diet](#).

Instead, four out of the seven studies showed that people who ate 42–84g of nuts as part of an ER diet achieved significantly more weight loss than those on ER diets without nuts. Weight loss from the 'nut-enriched' ER diets achieved an extra 1.4–7.4 kg which may be related to the ability of nuts to help curb hunger efficiently.

Interestingly, in the studies that showed no difference in weight loss between 'nut-enriched' and 'nut-free' ER diets, the diets typically included fewer nuts.

This is good news for people looking to manage their weight, particularly with the latest Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) data showing 67% of Australian adults are living with overweight or obesity.

UniSA researcher Professor Alison Coates says nuts are a nutrient-rich food that should be included in weight-loss diets.

"People often avoid nuts when trying to lose weight because they think that the energy and fat content in nuts can contribute to weight gain," Prof Coates says.

"But in fact, nuts are rich in healthy unsaturated fats, plant protein and dietary fiber, all of which play a role in promoting satiety, and reducing excess calorie consumption. Nuts are associated with improved cardiovascular and [metabolic health](#), better gut health and enhanced cognitive performance.

"Despite this, most Australians do not eat enough nuts, and 60% report eating none at all.

"If weight gain was a concern discouraging people from eating nuts—rest assured that this is not the case. Nuts do not cause [weight gain](#). Furthermore, they do not adversely affect weight loss, rather they appear to assist it."

Dr. Sharayah Carter, a co-author of the study, says the study's results are welcome news for nut lovers everywhere.

"Nuts are an important part of many people's diets because they provide a taste and texture you can't find in other food groups, while also being a healthy, on-the-go snack," Dr. Carter says.

"For people who enjoy eating nuts, knowing that they can help meet [weight-loss](#) goals, while also improving your overall health is a huge plus. It's also great for health professionals who can be confident in recommending nuts, in the context of a healthy diet, without concerns of an adverse effect on weight."

More information: Lauren C. Mead et al, Effects of energy-restricted diets with or without nuts on weight, body composition and glycaemic control in adults: a scoping review, *Nutrition Research Reviews* (2024). [DOI: 10.1017/S0954422424000106](https://doi.org/10.1017/S0954422424000106)

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