



Taken from: <http://www.nutrition-and-you.com/peanuts.html>

Delicious, crunchy, and nutty peanuts are one of the popular oil seeds known to humankind since centuries. The kernels are enriched with many noteworthy health-benefiting nutrients essential for optimum health and wellness. Just a handful of peanuts per day provides enough recommended levels of phenolic anti-oxidants, minerals, vitamins, and protein. They are actually *legumes* but carry almost all the qualities of other popular edible kernels such as pistachio, almonds, etc.

Health Benefits

- Peanuts are rich in energy (567 calories per 100 g) and contain health benefiting nutrients, minerals, antioxidants and vitamins that are essential for optimum health.
- They compose sufficient levels of mono-unsaturated fatty acids (MUFA), especially oleic acid. MUFA helps lower LDL or "bad cholesterol" and increases HDL or "good cholesterol" level in the blood. Research studies suggest that Mediterranean diet which is rich in monounsaturated fatty acids help to prevent coronary artery disease and stroke risk by favoring healthy blood lipid profile.
- Peanut kernels are good source of dietary protein; compose fine quality amino acids that are essential for growth and development.
- Research studies have shown that peanuts contain high concentrations of poly-phenolic antioxidants, primarily p-Coumaric acid. This compound has been thought to reduce the risk of stomach cancer by limiting formation of carcinogenic nitrosamines in the stomach.

Healthy Foods

Health Benefits: Peanuts

- Peanuts are an excellent source of resveratrol, another polyphenolic antioxidant. Resveratrol has been found to have protective function against cancers, heart disease, degenerative nerve disease, Alzheimer's disease, and viral/fungal infections.
- Furthermore, studies suggest that resveratrol may reduce stroke risk through altering molecular mechanisms in the blood vessels (reducing susceptibility to vascular damage through decreased activity of angiotensin, a systemic hormone responsible for blood vessel constriction that would elevate blood pressure), and by increasing production of vasodilator hormone, *nitric oxide*.
- Recent research studies suggest that roasting/boiling enhances antioxidant bio-availability in the peanuts. It has been found that boiled peanuts have two and four-fold increase in isoflavone antioxidants *biochanin-A* and *genistein* content, respectively.
- The kernels are an excellent source of vitamin E (a-tocopherol); containing about 8 g per 100 g. vitamin E is a powerful lipid soluble antioxidant which helps maintain the integrity of cell membrane of mucus membranes and skin by protecting from harmful oxygen free radicals.
- The nuts are packed with many important B-complex groups of vitamins such as riboflavin, niacin, thiamin, pantothenic acid, vitamin B-6, and folates. 100 g of peanuts provide about 85% of RDI of niacin, which contribute to brain health and blood flow to brain.
- The nuts are rich source of minerals like copper, manganese, potassium, calcium, iron, magnesium, zinc, and selenium.