

Almonds and Cashew nuts- similarity on Health Benefits

Both varieties of nuts are nutrient dense, energisers!

Written by Dr Harold Gunatillake-Health Writer

Almonds are heart shaped nuts while cashew which grows at the end of a fruit, is kidney shaped, and they both have similar health benefits to the heart, kidneys and rest of the body. Both almonds and cashew nuts are highly nutritious and concentrated forms of foods providing a substantial amount of energy. They are a great source of vitamin E, with 25g in each providing 70 percent of the recommended daily allowance. Vitamin E is an antioxidant which prevents the LDL cholesterol becoming bad. In situations where the antioxidants like vitamin E and others are deficient in the blood the LDL cholesterol becomes oxidised and unstable, gets bad and is suppose to participate in the building up of plaques. This theory is been disputed by many authorities.



Both have about the similar amount of micronutrients like magnesium, potassium, zinc, iron, fibre and are a good source of monounsaturated fat. Magnesium in both nuts are much more than in spinach or oatmeal, considered as containing high levels of magnesium. Both nuts contain 25% of the daily magnesium and significant amount of potassium. Magnesium is important for improving the flow of blood, oxygen and nutrients throughout the body while potassium is an electrolyte that is involved in nerve transmission and muscle contraction. It is also important for blood pressure and heart function. They contain more calcium than most other nuts which makes them great for vegetarians who do not eat any diary products. One small handful of almonds contains as much calcium as a quarter of a cup of milk and they also contain phosphorus which is necessary for bones and teeth. Handful of almonds contains twelve percent of your daily allowance of proteins

Monounsaturated fats generally lower the bad cholesterol (LDL), and both kinds of nuts are considered to lower the bad cholesterol level in the blood. They are heart-healthy due to the high content of monounsaturated fats, lowering the bad cholesterol. According to controlled studies by many research institutes including Harvard School of Public Health have shown that people who add nuts like cashews and almonds, etc. to their diet had their LDL levels reduced by 12 percent. People with high LDL, especially the oxidised bad fellow are more prone to coronary heart disease. Eat a hand full of either nut daily and you may not need to take large doses of statins for high cholesterol in your blood, causing many side effects. Most Mediterranean diets have high monounsaturated fat content as in olive oil and are considered to lower the risk of heart disease and cancer, and also live longer.

Both almonds and cashew nuts are low in saturated fats and less fattening than what you believe in. They are excellent foods, if you are on a calories reduction diet, they do suppress the appetite. As both kinds of nuts are nutrient dense make you feel nourished, and therefore are less likely to have cravings and over eat. Being plant foods contain absolutely no cholesterol. They also elevate the good cholesterol HDL. As well both help to block the body's absorption of fat and carbohydrates, which may prove to be significant in the areas of obesity, diabetes and heart disease. Fibre seems to help the blocking effect which also reduces the calories available which reduces the rise of blood sugar.

Almonds and cashew nuts contain phenylalanine, a brain boosting chemical that aids healthy development of our cognitive functions.

Nutritional content of Cashew: per 100gms

Moisture	5.9
Total Minerals	2.4
Total Fiber	1.3
Energy	785
Protein	24
Total Fat	64
Saturated	12.9
Unsaturated (Oleic)	36.8
Unsaturated (Linoleic)	10.2
Carbohydrate	41
Ca	53
P	52.2
Fe	5.3
Thiamin	0.63
Riboflavin	0.19
Niacin	2.5
Beta-carotene	60
Retinol Equivalent	33 IU; 10 mcg
Vitamin K	650

Amino acid composition (%) in Cashew Kernel Protein

Glutamic Acid	28.0																
Leucine	11.93																
Iso Leucine	<table border="1"> <tr><td>Oleic Acid</td><td>73.3</td></tr> <tr><td>Linoleic Acid</td><td>7.67</td></tr> <tr><td>Palmitic Acid</td><td>0.89</td></tr> <tr><td>Stearic Acid</td><td>11.24</td></tr> <tr><td>Lignoseriic Acid</td><td>0.15</td></tr> <tr><td>Unsaponifiable Matter</td><td>0.42</td></tr> <tr><td colspan="2">Fatty Acid Composition of Cashew Kernel (%)</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>3.86</td></tr> </table>	Oleic Acid	73.3	Linoleic Acid	7.67	Palmitic Acid	0.89	Stearic Acid	11.24	Lignoseriic Acid	0.15	Unsaponifiable Matter	0.42	Fatty Acid Composition of Cashew Kernel (%)			3.86
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	3.86																
Alanine	3.18																
Phenylalanine	4.35																
Tyrosine	3.20																
Arginine	10.30																
Glycine	5.33																
Histidine	1.81																
Lysine	3.32																
Methionine	1.30																
Cystine	1.02																
Threonine	2.78																
Valine	4.53																

Tryptophane	1.37
Aspartic Acid	10.78
Proline	3.72
Serine	5.76

Cashew nut milk is a substitute for cow's milk for the vegans. Mix about 20 cashews in water in the blender and it turns into milk and a great substitute for milk.

Magnesium content in cashew nuts is beneficial for promoting bone growth. Those who suffer from muscle cramps in the night should take magnesium tablets or plenty of cashew nuts and or almonds.

Copper helps to keep bones and joints and blood vessels flexible. Flexible blood vessels help to reduce blood pressure. Being rich in manganese, riboflavin (vit B2) and copper, all of which aid in energy production. Take them with you when you expend energy in sports activities. Almonds and cashew have high levels of potassium and low in sodium and both factors regulate blood pressure.

Fibre in both almonds and cashew has detoxifying effects, prevent cancer of the large bowels. The National Cancer Institute recently releases a study linking high fibre diets to lower risk of colon cancer.

Both nuts have a stabilising effect on sugar and insulin levels after meals, offering protection from diabetes.

Being high fibre they ease constipation and help you to stay regular.

In traditional Chinese Medicine, almonds are considered anti-inflammatory, anti-spasmodic, emollient and also used as a tonic they are also known as brain and bone food, probably due to their high calcium content.

Finally, almonds also contain folic acid, zinc, phyto-chemicals, selenium, copper, biotin, riboflavin, niacin, and iron, making them a true nutritional powerhouse. The best way to eat almonds is in their natural, un-blanched state but you can also choose to eat them lightly toasted without any added oils, like cashew nuts.