

Effects of plant-based diets high in raw or roasted almonds, or roasted almond butter on serum lipoproteins in humans.

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Abstract:

Objective: To compare the lipid-altering effect of roasted salted almonds and roasted almond butter with that of raw almonds, as part of a plant-based diet. Methods: Thirty-eight free-living, hypercholesterolemic men (n = 12) and women (n = 26) with a mean total serum cholesterol (TC) of 245 ± 29 mg/dL (mean \pm SD) followed a heart-healthy diet including 100g of one of three forms of almonds: roasted salted almonds, roasted almond butter or raw almonds for four weeks. Measurements of serum TC, triglycerides (TG), selected lipoproteins and blood pressure were taken at baseline and after four weeks. Results: All three forms of almonds in the context of a heart-healthy diet significantly lowered low-density lipoprotein-cholesterol (LDL) from baseline to the completion of the study. Both raw and roasted almonds significantly lowered TC, whereas the decrease by almond butter (in a smaller cohort) did not reach statistical significance. High-density lipoprotein-cholesterol (HDL) did not significantly change with raw or roasted almonds but slightly increased with almond butter. At the end of the study, blood pressure did not change significantly from baseline values for any of the groups. Conclusion: These results suggest that un-blanched almonds-whether raw, dry roasted, or in roasted butter form-can play an effective role in cholesterol-lowering, plant-based diets.