



Almond milk: unique benefits and warnings from scientists

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Abstract. The article discusses the main properties of almond milk and its effect on the human body. A systematic review of modern specialized literature and relevant scientific data was carried out. The chemical composition and nutritional value of the drink are indicated, the use of almond milk in various types of medicine and the effectiveness of its use in various diseases are considered. The potentially adverse effects of almond milk on the human body under certain medical conditions and diseases are analyzed separately.

Key words: almond milk , useful properties, contraindications, composition, calorie content

This is the most popular plant based milk. Many people find it tastier and healthier than other plant-based drink options and add it to coffee, oatmeal, and baked goods. The product is low-calorie, lactose-free, gluten-free and is an excellent choice for people who are trying to lose weight, practice veganism, suffer from lactase deficiency or allergies to cow's milk protein. We tell the whole truth about its nutritional value and shortcomings.

Unsweetened almond milk is typically 15-20 calories per 100 grams. It has half the calories of skimmed cow's milk, but the CBF can vary based on the amount of almonds per serving. 100 g contains a lot of flavonoids, as well as 22% of the daily value of vitamin E and 12% of calcium. Vegans and anyone on a plant-based diet should choose a drink fortified with vitamin D and other beneficial substances. ^[1, 2, 3, 4]

Top 5 health benefits of almond milk for men, women and children over a year old

1. Strengthens bones

A commercially produced drink can be as nutritious as cow's milk - contain a lot of calcium, [vitamin D](#). Your body cannot manufacture these components on its own, so it is important to consume them through your diet. They are necessary to maintain bones, the optimal level of blood pressure. The drink enriched with micronutrients reduces the risk of fractures, osteoporosis. ^[5, 6, 7]

2. Does not harm people with chronic kidney disease

Almond milk can replace traditional dairy products for people with chronic kidney disease (CKD). The disease forces them to abandon cow's milk because of the content of phosphorus and potassium - diseased kidneys contribute to their accumulation and excess in the blood. 100 g of a traditional drink contains approximately 100 mg of phosphorus and 150 mg of potassium, while the same serving of almond contains almost three times less (30 and 60 mg, respectively). ^[8, 9]

3. Maintains healthy skin

Frequent consumption of dairy products can provoke acne. If you have acne and breakouts, it is safer to drink almond milk. It does not contain lactose and β -casein A1, but it does contain vitamin E, a powerful antioxidant that protects the skin and the entire body from free radicals. ^[10, 11]

4. Good for the heart

Plant foods reduce the risk of obesity, heart disease, and type 2 diabetes. A low-fat diet filled with whole foods, vegetables, and fruits lowers total cholesterol and glycated hemoglobin, which determines blood sugar levels. Therefore, almond milk not only expands the vegetarian diet, but also keeps the heart healthy. ^[12, 13]

5. Helps Lose and Maintain Weight

An unsweetened drink contains few carbohydrates - 0.3 g per 100 g. Most of them are dietary fiber. The same amount of cow's milk contains approximately 4.5 g of carbohydrates in the form of lactose. The use of a plant product benefits weight loss and diabetics who need to monitor the amount of carbohydrates in the diet. ^[14, 15, 16]

Who is not suitable for almond milk: disadvantages and contraindications

A lactose-free drink has a number of disadvantages, it is not suitable for everyone and, if abused, causes side effects:

- contains little protein - 1 g per glass, which is not enough for muscle growth, hormone production and skin regeneration;
- does not have natural sweetness, like traditional products, so many manufacturers add sugar, flavorings to it; ^[17]
- the minerals contained in it can be poorly absorbed due to phytic acid - a substance that blocks the absorption of iron, zinc, magnesium;
- not suitable for infants - creates a risk of nutritional deficiencies for children under one year old, does not replace breast milk and formula;
- dangerous for people with nut allergies;
- may contain the thickener carrageenan, which is harmful to the gastrointestinal tract, which is used by many manufacturers;
- excessive consumption provokes digestive problems - stomach discomfort, nausea, diarrhea;
- considered a goitrogenic product - people with reduced thyroid function should refuse it or drink it in moderation.

Abuse of a healthy drink eliminates its benefits and can even worsen health

How much almond milk is good to drink?

If you eat a balanced diet with plenty of calcium and vitamin D, you don't need to add the drink to your regular diet. However, it can become part of a healthy diet and change your eating habits for the better.

Children over 12 months of age may take several tablespoons of the product between meals. Adults can drink a glass of the drink daily at any time of the day. It is especially useful in the evening, as it contains magnesium and tryptophan, which help to fall asleep, promote better sleep.

Where to buy, how to cook and drink almond milk?

The drink can be found in most supermarkets, where it is available neat, with added sugar and different flavors such as vanilla, chocolate. However, a commercial drink may be too dilute and provide little benefit. Manufacturers compensate for this deficiency by adding vitamin D, [calcium](#) and other nutrients necessary for the body.

Many people have learned to cook it themselves at home. To make two cups of almond milk, all you need is almonds and water:

- soak 1/2 cup (65 g) raw almonds for 8-12 hours or overnight;
- combine the soaked almonds with 2 cups (470 ml) of water and beat with a blender until the mixture is smooth, creamy;
- strain the mixture, squeezing out excess moisture (the pulp can be used in baking).

The density of the liquid is easy to regulate due to water, as well as sweetness - sweeten with honey, cherry jam. The drink is stored for no more than five days in the refrigerator. It provides all its benefits at room temperature. It is not recommended to heat it to high temperatures, as boiling reduces the nutritional value.

The product is versatile and can be used in different dishes:

- cereals, oatmeal;
- smoothies;
- protein shakes;
- coffee, tea, cocoa;
- cocktails;
- baking - pancakes, muffins;
- in soups, sauces and dressings;
- in homemade almond yogurt, ice cream.

Expert comment

Tatyana Eliseeva, nutritionist

Almond milk has grown in popularity thanks to the trend towards healthy, mindful eating and veganism. Some attribute its fame to successful marketing, but the low-calorie drink has more advantages than disadvantages. It is good for the heart and other organs, suitable for vegetarians, vegans, people with lactose intolerance and fans of the keto diet. Try adding it to cereal, morning coffee - you will get the maximum benefit without sacrificing health and taste.

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