

Nutrition In A Nutshell

Why Almonds Are An Essential Ingredient

(NAPSA)—A well-stocked pantry means having essential ingredients on hand for easy-to-prepare meals and snacks. Take inventory—if almonds are in your pantry, then you have the most essential ingredient. So, what makes almonds so great?

“Almonds are an important staple to have in any power pantry because they’re tasty, nutritious and they go with just about anything,” says Keith Ayoob, EdD, RD, FADA co-author of a new book, *The Uncle Sam Diet: The Four-Week Eating Plan for a Thinner, Healthier America*. “I put them on fruit and low-fat yogurt in the morning, or on a spicy stir-fry or green salad at dinnertime. Or, I often eat a handful as a snack.”

Almonds are the best of both worlds as they are packed with plenty of flavor and nutrients, providing heart-healthy monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats, dietary fiber, protein, vitamin E, and essential minerals. In fact, research shows that when people add almonds to their regular diet, their overall intake of these important nutrients increases and helps them to meet dietary recommendations. Just one handful, about an ounce of almonds (or 23 almonds), can be an important part of a healthy, nutrient-dense diet.

So, go ahead, open up your pantry and make almonds an essential part of your day!

Almond-Cherry Energy Bars

These crunchy bars are loaded with plenty of essential vitamins and nutrients to get you through your day.

Ingredients:

Cooking spray



These crunchy bars are loaded with plenty of essential vitamins.

- 3 cups favorite granola**
- 1 cup wheat germ**
- 1½ cups almond butter**
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract**
- ½ cup whole-wheat flour**
- ¾ cup honey**
- 1 cup dried cherries or dried cherry-flavored cranberries**
- 1 cup slivered almonds**

Preparation:

Preheat oven to 350°F. Lightly grease a 9- by 13-inch rimmed baking sheet with cooking spray and line with parchment paper, leaving excess paper on edges. Combine all ingredients in a large bowl and spread into pan. Press firmly. Bake for 10 minutes. Pull on parchment paper to remove from pan and cut into 24 bars while still warm—six on one side and four on the other. Store airtight for up to 5 days. Makes 24 bars.

Visit www.AlmondsAreIn.com for nutritional information or more delicious recipes.