

Nutrition and Health

Benefits of Cashew Milk



Cashew milk is a popular nondairy beverage made from whole cashews and water. It has a creamy, rich consistency and is loaded with vitamins, minerals, healthy fats, and other beneficial plant compounds. Available in unsweetened and sweetened varieties, cashew milk can replace cow's milk in most recipes.

1. Loaded With Nutrients

Cashew milk contains healthy fats, protein, and a variety of vitamins and minerals. Most of the fat in this highly nutritious beverage comes from unsaturated fatty acids that boost heart health and offer other benefits.

Here's a comparison of 1 cup (240 ml) of homemade cashew milk — made from water and 1 ounce (28 grams) of cashews — to 1 cup (240 ml) of unsweetened, commercial cashew milk.

Nutrients	Homemade cashew milk	Store-bought cashew milk
Calories	160	25
Carbs	9 grams	1 gram
Protein	5 grams	less than 1 gram
Fat	14 grams	2 grams
Fiber	1 gram	0 grams
Magnesium	20% of the Daily Value (DV)	0% of the DV
Iron	10% of the DV	2% of the DV
Potassium	5% of the DV	1% of the DV
Calcium	1% of the DV	45% of the DV*
Vitamin D	0% of the DV	25% of the DV*

*indicates a nutrient that has been added through fortification.

Commercial cashew milks are typically fortified with vitamins and minerals and have higher amounts of some nutrients, compared to homemade versions.



Homemade cashew milks don't need to be strained, which increases their fiber content.

They're also packed with magnesium — a vital mineral for many body processes, including nerve function, heart health, and blood pressure regulation.

All cashew milks are naturally lactose-free and can replace cow's milk for those who have trouble digesting dairy.

2. May Boost Heart Health

Studies have linked cashew milk to a lower risk of heart disease.

This plant-based drink is rich in polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fatty acids. Consuming these fats in



place of less healthy ones may decrease your risk of heart disease. Cashew milk also contains potassium and magnesium — two nutrients that may boost heart health and prevent heart disease.

In a review of 22 studies, people with the highest potassium intake had a 24% lower risk of stroke.

Another review concluded that high magnesium intake, as well as high blood levels of this mineral, decreased heart disease risk factors, including diabetes and high blood pressure.

3. Good for Eye Health

Cashews are rich in the antioxidants lutein and zeaxanthin. These compounds may prevent cellular damage to your eyes caused by unstable molecules called free radicals.

One study found a significant association between low blood levels of lutein and zeaxanthin and poor retinal health.

Eating foods rich in lutein and zeaxanthin may reduce your risk of age-related macular degeneration (AMD), an eye disease that causes vision loss.

Another study showed that people with the highest intake of lutein and zeaxanthin — and the highest predicted blood levels of these antioxidants — were 40% less likely to develop advanced AMD.

High blood levels of lutein and zeaxanthin have also been linked to a 40% lower risk of age-related cataracts in older adults.

Since cashews are a good source of lutein and zeaxanthin, adding cashew milk to your diet may help prevent eye issues.

4. May Aid Blood Clotting

Cashew milk is rich in vitamin K, which is vital for blood clotting. Not getting enough vitamin K can result in excessive bleeding. While vitamin K deficiency in healthy adults is very rare, people with inflammatory bowel disease (IBD) and other malabsorption issues are more likely to be deficient.

Consuming foods rich in vitamin K, such as cashew milk, can help maintain sufficient levels of this protein. However, an increased dietary vitamin K intake may decrease the effectiveness of blood-thinning medications. If you're taking blood-thinning medications, consult your healthcare provider before making changes to your diet.

5. May Improve Blood Sugar Control

Drinking cashew milk may help with blood sugar control — especially in people with diabetes. Cashews contain compounds that may promote proper blood sugar control in your body. One study found that a compound in cashews called anacardic acid stimulated the uptake of circulating blood sugar in rat muscle cells. Research on a similar nut also containing anacardic acid found that extracts from the nut's milk significantly decreased blood sugar levels in rats with type 2 diabetes.

In addition, cashew milk is lactose-free and therefore has fewer carbs than dairy. Using it in place of cow's milk may help with blood sugar control in those with diabetes.

Still, more research is needed to better understand the benefits of cashew milk in managing diabetes.

6. Good for Your Skin

Cashews are loaded with copper. Therefore, milk derived from these nuts — especially the homemade kind — is



rich in this mineral as well. Copper plays a large role in the creation of skin proteins and is important for optimal skin health. This mineral regulates the production of collagen and elastin, two proteins that contribute to skin elasticity and strength.

Maintaining optimal levels of collagen in your body promotes skin health, while inadequate collagen can lead to skin aging.

Consuming cashew milk and other copper-rich foods may boost your body's natural production of collagen and keep your skin looking healthy and young.

7. May Have Anticancer Effects

Test-tube studies suggest that compounds in cashew milk may prevent the development of certain cancer cells. Cashews are particularly high in anacardic acid, a compound that may fight free radicals that are thought to play a role in cancer development.

One test-tube study found that anacardic acid stopped the spread of human breast cancer cells.

Another showed that anacardic acid enhanced the activity of an anticancer drug against human skin cancer cells.

Consuming cashew milk can provide your body with anacardic acid that may help prevent the growth of cancer cells.

However, current research is limited to test-tube studies. More studies — especially in humans — are needed to better understand the potential anticancer properties of cashews.

8. Boosts Immune Health

Cashews and milk derived from them are loaded with antioxidants and zinc. This may help boost immunity.

Studies show that nuts may decrease the inflammatory response in your body and improve immunity, likely because they're an excellent source of antioxidants and other compounds that fight inflammation and disease.

In addition, your body uses zinc to create immune cells that help fight disease and infection. This mineral may also act as an antioxidant that can stop cell damage involved in inflammation and disease.

One study associated low blood levels of zinc with increased levels of inflammatory markers, such as C-reactive protein (CRP).

The zinc in cashew milk may help decrease inflammation in your body and improve immunity.

9. May Improve Iron-Deficiency Anemia

When your body doesn't get enough iron, it can't produce adequate amounts of the protein hemoglobin that helps red blood cells carry oxygen. This results in anemia and leads to fatigue, dizziness, shortness of breath, cold hands or feet, and other symptoms.

One study found that women with low iron intake were roughly six times more likely to develop anemia than those with adequate iron consumption.

Therefore, getting enough iron from your diet is important for preventing or improving symptoms of iron-deficiency anemia.



Since cashew milk is high in iron, it may help you maintain adequate levels. However, your body better absorbs this type of iron when consumed with a source of vitamin C.

To increase your absorption of iron from cashew milk, try blending it in a smoothie with fresh strawberries or oranges that contain vitamin C.

10. Easily Added to Your Diet

Cashew milk is a versatile and healthy addition to your diet. Since it's free of lactose, it's suitable for those who avoid dairy. It can be used in place of cow's milk in most recipes — including smoothies, baked goods, and cold or hot cereals. You can also add it to sauces to make them creamier or even use it to make ice cream. What's more, since cashew milk has a rich, creamy texture, it tastes delicious in coffee drinks, hot chocolate, or tea.

Keep in mind that even though it can be substituted for cow's milk, cashew milk has a nuttier, sweeter taste.

How to Make Cashew Milk

Making cashew milk is incredibly easy.

Plus, the homemade version is more concentrated and thus contains more nutrients than commercial varieties.

You can also control how much sugar and other ingredients you add.

To make cashew milk, soak 1 cup (130 grams) of cashews in very hot water for 15 minutes or in room temperature water for 1–2 hours or longer.

Drain and rinse the cashews, then add them to a blender with 3–4 cups (720–960 ml) of water. Blend on high for 30

seconds to 1 minute or until smooth and frothy.

You can add dates, honey, or maple syrup to sweeten, if desired. Other popular additions include sea salt, cocoa powder, or vanilla extract.

Unlike most other plant-based milks, you don't have to strain cashew milk through a thin towel or cheesecloth.

You can keep your cashew milk in a glass jar or container in the fridge for up to three to four days. If it separates, simply shake before use.

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Source: <https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/cashew-milk-benefits#section12>