

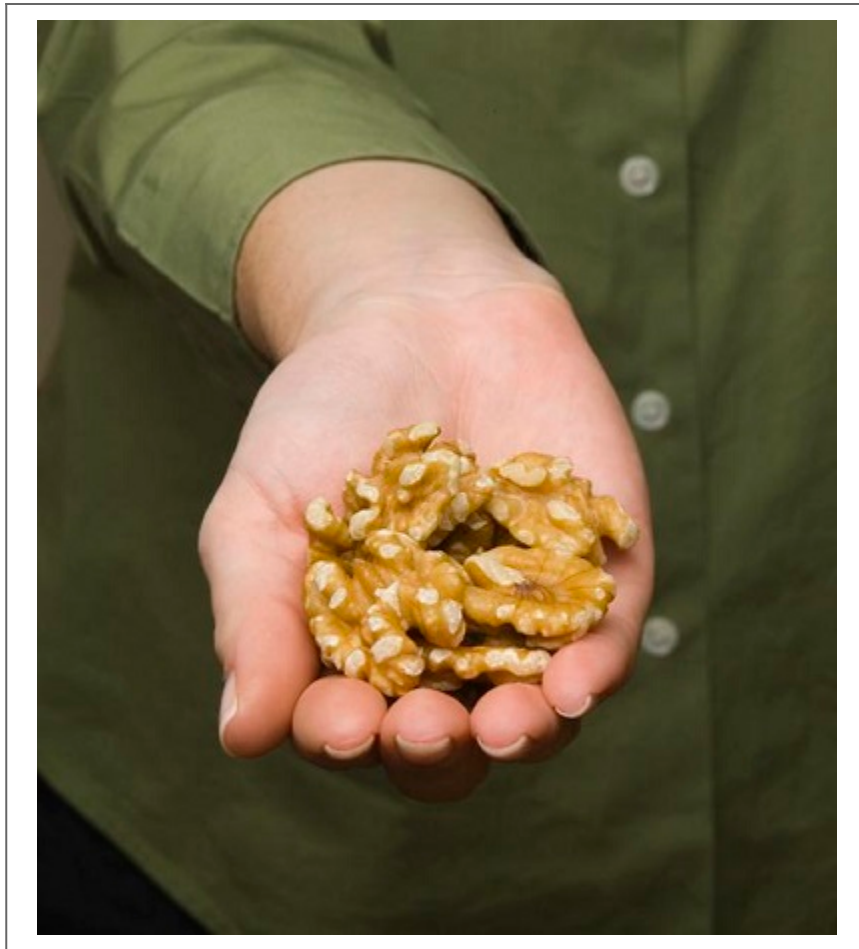
Walnuts Among Omega-3 Foods Linked to Brain Development Benefits in Children and Adolescents

Category: Business

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Two new studies add to growing evidence that a mother's diet during pregnancy has lasting implications for her child's brain development and decision-making skills- extending well beyond infancy into the teen years.



A handful of California walnuts

In a population-based cohort study published in [The American Journal of Clinical Nutrition](#), researchers found that higher maternal consumption of nuts and seafood during pregnancy was associated with improved neuropsychological function in children from ages 4 to 15.¹ A complementary study published in [European Child & Adolescent Psychiatry](#) reported that maternal intake of nuts and fish was linked to reduced risky decision-making behaviors in children at age 11.²

The study evaluated a sample of more than 1,700 mother-child pairs from four Spanish regions was analyzed. Maternal diet was analyzed using a food frequency questionnaire, while the children's neuropsychological function was assessed through standardized tests measuring reaction time and variability (attention), working memory, and fluid intelligence.

While neither study focused exclusively on walnuts, both contribute to the broader evidence supporting the role of

including nutrient-dense foods, such as nuts, as part of a healthy prenatal diet.

Key takeaways

- Children whose mothers consumed more nuts and seafood during pregnancy scored higher on measures of attention, working memory, and executive function throughout childhood and adolescence.
- These children were also less likely to make impulsive, high-risk decisions in early adolescence.
- Omega-3 fatty acids- abundant in walnuts and fatty fish- were identified as a key nutrient associated with these benefits. Walnuts are the only tree nut that is an excellent source of the plant-based omega-3 fatty acid ALA (2.7g/28g).

About the California Walnut Commission

The California Walnut Commission (CWC) represents more than 3,700 California walnut growers and approximately 70 handlers, grown in multi-generational farmers' family orchards. California walnuts, known for their excellent nutritional value and quality, are shipped around the world all year long, with more than 99% of the walnuts grown in the United States being from California. The CWC, established in 1987, promotes usage of walnuts through domestic and export market development activities as well as supports health research with consuming walnuts.

References

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