

JANUARY: LEGUMES

Legumes, such as **kidney beans**, **pinto beans**, **lima beans**, **black-eyed peas**, and **lentils**, are excellent sources of protein, and also provide other nutrients such as iron, zinc, and fiber. They are similar to meats, poultry, and fish with respect to their protein content. Many people consider **legumes** as excellent vegetarian alternatives for meat – but you don't have to be vegetarian to benefit from **legumes**—try eating some of the great variety of legumes instead of meat twice a week for a healthy protein and fiber-filled meal.

CHECK OUT SOME VARIETIES OF LEGUMES DESCRIBED BELOW!



Green Baby Lima Beans come from Peru and are very popular in the Americas. These are medium-sized flat beans with a greenish white color, buttery flavor, and creamy texture.



Lentils range in color from yellow to red-orange to green, brown and black. They also vary in size, and are sold in many forms, with or without the skins, whole or split. They contain the most protein of all legumes, are inexpensive, and can be stored for a long time.



Black Beans are sweet tasting with an almost mushroom-like flavor and soft floury texture. These beans are medium sized, oval, with a matte black color. They are the most popular beans in Costa Rica and Cuba.



Light Red Kidney Beans have a solid texture and flavor. They are characterized by their large, kidney-shape with a pink color. This bean is popular in the Caribbean region as well as in Portugal and Spain.



Navy Beans are small, white and oval with a refined texture and delicate flavor. These are the beans used for the famous Boston and English baked beans, because their skin and fine texture do not break up on cooking.



Black-eyed Beans have a scented aroma, creamy texture and distinctive flavor. Black-eyed beans are really a type of pea, which gives it its distinctive flavor and rapid cooking potential, with no pre-soaking needed.



Pinto Beans are the most widely produced bean in the United States and are one of the most popular in the Americas. They also contain the most fiber of all beans. They are typically known for their medium oval sized shape.



Garbanzo Beans or chickpeas are the most widely consumed legume in the world. Originating in the Middle East, they have a firm texture with a flavor somewhere between chestnuts and walnuts.

Legumes Tips

- Add **chickpeas, black beans, or green peas** to spinach salads, tossed green salads, whole wheat pasta salads, or to stir-fried dishes for added color and a healthy dose of protein, fiber, and vitamins!
- To increase fiber intake try to serve **legumes** at least 2 to 3 times a week. It is easy; just add your favorite **beans** to soups, salads, or casseroles.
- Substituting meat with your favorite legume is inexpensive and quick; instead of beef use **lentils, kidney beans, black beans, cannellini beans, and chickpeas** for a tasty vegetarian chili. You may not miss the meat!
- For an after-school snack, puree **chickpeas or black beans**, and a touch of salt, garlic, and herbs, into a delicious dip for raw vegetables such as broccoli, carrots, and cauliflower.

Legumes Recipe!

CHICKPEA DIP – AN EASY-TO-MAKE AND TASTY DIP!

Makes 4 servings

Ingredients

3 cloves garlic (or 3 tsp. prepared, minced garlic)
 ¼ cup plain Greek nonfat yogurt
 1 Tbsp. fresh lemon juice, or bottled lemon juice
 1 tsp. extra virgin olive oil
 ¼ tsp. salt
 ¼ tsp. paprika
 ⅛ tsp. pepper
 1 (19 oz.) can **chickpeas**, drained

Put all ingredients into a food processor or blender and blend until smooth. Serve at room temperature with whole wheat pita chips and raw vegetables.

Legumes Recipes!

LENTIL ONE DISH – AN EASY NUTRITION-PACKED MEAL!

Makes 6 servings

Ingredients

1 cup uncooked and rinsed **lentils**
 ½ cup uncooked brown whole grain rice
 3 cups sliced carrots
 1 lb. Swiss chard, cleaned and chopped
 1 lb. kale, cleaned and chopped
 3 cups water
 1 packet reduced sodium onion soup mix
 1 tsp. dried basil
 1 Tbsp. olive oil

Place all ingredients in large pot. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat, cover and cook until rice is done, 30-45 minutes.

TEXAS CAVIAR – AN EASY-TO-MAKE HEALTHY APPETIZER OR SIDE DISH!

Ingredients

2 16-ounce cans **black-eyed peas, drained**
 1/3 cup minced green bell pepper
 1/3 cup minced red bell pepper
 5 scallions, minced, including the green parts
 ½ cup extra-virgin olive oil
 2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
 1 clove garlic, minced (or 1 tsp prepared, minced garlic)
 1 teaspoon cumin powder
 1 teaspoon minced jalapeno chili (or more to taste!)

Place drained black-eyed peas in a bowl. Add green and red bell peppers, scallions, olive oil, vinegar, garlic, cumin, and chili. Mix well. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate for at least 5 hours. Serve chilled or at room temperature with whole grain crackers or with green leaf lettuce to make lettuce wraps - let your family wrap a spoonful of the "caviar" in individual leaves!



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JANUARY: CRUCIFEROUS VEGETABLES

Cruciferous vegetables, such as **cauliflower**, **broccoli**, **cabbage**, and **Brussels sprouts** are a good source of vitamin C, folic acid, iron, calcium, beta-carotene, and fiber. Many cruciferous vegetables can be eaten raw, as crudité with your favorite reduced fat dip or hummus; or try chopping them up and putting them in salads for some extra-nutritious crunch. Cooking them is great too - they are yummy and nutritious sautéed or steamed, top them with your favorite herbs and/or parmesan cheese for added flavor!

CHECK OUT SOME VARIETIES OF CRUCIFEROUS VEGETABLES DESCRIBED BELOW!



Cauliflower — **Cauliflower** is an excellent source of Vitamin C. When selecting **cauliflower**, look for heads that are white or creamy white, firm, compact, and heavy for their size. To preserve as many vitamins and minerals as possible, the best way to cook super-nutritious **cauliflower** is to steam, cook in the microwave, or stir-fry.



Broccoli — Choose **broccoli** that is dark green, which means it contains the most nutrients. Just as in the case with cauliflower above, the best way to cook **broccoli** in order to preserve the most nutrients is to steam, cook in the microwave, or stir-fry with a little broth or water. Some of the vitamins and minerals are lost from the **broccoli** when it is boiled.



Cabbage — One of the oldest vegetables, **cabbage** continues to be a dietary staple and an inexpensive food. It is easy to grow, tolerates the cold, and keeps well. Keep **cabbage** cold until you are ready to use it to help retain its vitamin C content. Sauté it in some olive oil with a bit of salt, chop and put it in a stir fry, or use it raw in shredded form in salads or coleslaw!



Brussels sprouts — Most **Brussels sprouts** are grown in California. They are available all year-round, but their peak growing season is autumn through early spring. **Brussels sprouts** look like miniature heads of cabbage. They are slightly milder than cabbage and denser in texture. Brussels sprouts are yummy roasted in the oven, or chopped and sautéed on the stove top!

Cruciferous Vegetables Tips

- When you make macaroni and cheese remember to use reduced fat cheese and whole wheat pasta, and think about tossing in some slightly cooked, chopped **broccoli** for extra color and healthy vitamins, minerals, and fiber!
- Serve steamed **cauliflower** sprinkled with some reduced fat grated parmesan cheese for a quick-to-prepare, nutritious great side dish!
- For lots of vitamin C, add raw chopped **broccoli**, **cauliflower**, and **cabbage** to your favorite salad.
- Small cuts of raw **broccoli** and **cauliflower** make great party appetizers with a little reduced-fat ranch dressing as a dip.
- Coleslaw is an easy side for just about any meal! Buy pre-shredded **cabbage** in the produce section of the market, mix in some reduced-fat mayonnaise, about 1 tablespoon of vinegar (or more to taste), and salt and pepper to taste for a healthy **cruciferous** side dish!

Cruciferous Vegetables Recipe!

CREAMY CABBAGE SLAW —*MAKE YOUR OWN, IT'S EASY!*

Makes 4 servings

Ingredients

- 3 cups shredded green or red **cabbage** (look for packaged shredded cabbage in produce section!)
- 1 bunch green onions, trimmed and sliced
- 1 large stalk of celery, sliced
- ½ cup mayonnaise
- 1 Tbsp white vinegar
- ½ tsp salt

Combine vegetables in a bowl. In another small bowl, whisk together mayo, vinegar, salt, and sugar. Pour dressing into vegetables, stir to coat, cover and chill for 15 minutes in the freezer or at least 1 hour in the refrigerator before serving.

Cruciferous Vegetables Recipe!

VEGETABLE PASTA ITALIANO — *LOTS OF HEALTHY INGREDIENTS, QUICK AND EASY TO MAKE!*

Makes 6 servings

Ingredients

- ½ pound lean ground turkey
- 1 red bell pepper, seeded and thinly sliced
- 1 Tbsp. paprika
- 1 can (14 ½ oz.) crushed tomatoes
- 1 can (14 ½ oz.) reduced-sodium chicken broth
- 2 cups uncooked whole wheat bow-tie or rotini pasta
- 2 cups **broccoli** florets, washed
- 1 cup **cauliflower** florets, washed

Savory Topping:

Ingredients

- ½ bunch parsley (or 2 tsp. dried parsley)
- ¼ cup seasoned whole wheat dry bread crumbs
- ¼ cup grated reduced fat parmesan cheese

Crumble ground turkey into a skillet, brown over medium high heat, stirring occasionally, till cooked. Add red pepper slices and paprika, cook for 2 more minutes. Add crushed tomatoes, chicken broth, and whole wheat pasta to the skillet. Bring mixture to a boil, reduce heat, cover and simmer for 15 minutes. Remove the lid from the skillet and arrange broccoli and cauliflower over the pasta. Replace lid and continue cooking for 10 minutes.

Prepare the savory topping: If using fresh parsley, pull leaves from parsley stems and combine with bread crumbs and grated cheese; mix together. Sprinkle savory topping over vegetables in skillet and let sit for 3 minutes before serving so cheese has time to melt.



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