

User-friendly Pulses – Preparing Dried Beans, Peas, and Lentils

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What are pulses?

- Pulses are dried beans, peas, lentils, and chickpeas.
 - › They have vitamins and minerals like calcium, magnesium, zinc, iron, and B vitamins.
 - › They are high in fibre and protein.
 - › They do not have as much fat and cholesterol as other high protein foods.
 - › They may make you feel more full after your meals.
- Eating different pulses can keep your heart healthy. It can also help keep your diabetes under control.
- Canada's Food Guide recommends eating more plant-based protein foods. You can learn more about Canada's Food Guide by visiting:
 - › <http://food-guide.canada.ca>

Where can I buy pulses?

- You can find dried pulses in the bulk section or in the canned vegetable aisle of the grocery store. Look for:
 - › Kidney, lima, navy, or black beans
 - › Whole peas, split green peas, or yellow peas
 - › Red or green lentils
 - › Chickpeas (garbanzo beans)
- You can also buy canned pulses. They are cooked and ready to eat.
- You can also buy canned pulses that have no salt added.
- You can find canned pulses in the canned vegetable aisle, or in the specialty or international foods section of the grocery store. Look for:
 - › Chickpeas
 - › Baked beans
 - › Red or white kidney beans
 - › Lentils
 - › Pinto beans
 - › Black beans
- Pulses are cheaper than meat.
- For more tips on heart healthy eating, see pamphlet 1887, *Heart Healthy Eating Guide*:
 - › www.nshealth.ca/patient-education-resources/1887

How do I get pulses ready before cooking?

Dried pulses:

1. Rinse and sort dried pulses. Remove any broken pulses or foreign objects (like small rocks or anything that is not a pulse) that may be in the package.
- Most dried pulses need to be soaked in water overnight before cooking. You can also use a quick soaking method (see below).
 - Lentils do **not** need to be soaked overnight.

Quick soaking method 1:

1. Put rinsed pulses in a large pot.
2. Cover with 2 inches of water and bring to a boil.
3. Boil for 2 minutes, then remove from heat.
4. Cover and let stand for 1 hour. Drain and rinse.

Quick soaking method 2:

1. Put rinsed pulses in a large pot.
2. Cover with 2 inches of water and bring to a boil.
3. Boil for 10 minutes and then drain.
4. Cover pulses with cold water and let them soak for 30 minutes, then drain.

Source: *Lighthearted Everyday Cookbook*, by Ann Lindsay. Used with permission from the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Nova Scotia.

Ready-to-eat canned pulses:

1. Pour canned pulses into a strainer to drain.
 2. Rinse the pulses under running water for at least 10 seconds.
 3. Let drain for 2 minutes.
- This will remove almost half of the sodium from pulses that are canned with salt.

Ways to start eating pulses

- Use chickpeas in a salad or stir fry.
- Use lentils in vegetable stew.
- Use peas or beans in soup or pasta dishes.
- Replace half, or all, of the meat in spaghetti sauce with lentils.
- Replace half, or all, of the meat in burgers with beans or lentils.
- Try hummus (chickpea dip) (see page 6).
- Try vegetarian chili.
- Try bean burritos.

How to help lower gas from pulses

- You may have more gas when you first start eating pulses. This will get better as you eat more pulses over time.
- Let your body get used to pulses slowly.
- Start with small servings.
- Make sure you drink lots of fluids (like water).

When preparing dried pulses:

- Change the soaking water a few times.

When cooking dried pulses:

- Drain the cooking water after 30 minutes.
- Add fresh water and keep cooking until the beans are tender.
- Well-cooked beans will give you less gas.
- You can also try adding 1 tsp of baking soda to the cooking water. Rinse the pulses after cooking.

If you are using canned pulses:

- Drain and rinse them well before using.
- Some people use Beano[®] (a product to lower gas). If you use it, follow the instructions on the package.

Quick meals using 1 can of beans

Easy Chili

1. Dice 1 onion and 1 green pepper.
2. Heat some oil in a pot.
3. When the oil is warm enough, saute the onion and green pepper in the pot.
4. Add 1 can each of:
 - › Crushed tomatoes
 - › Kidney beans (rinsed and drained)
 - › Mushrooms
 - › Black beans (rinsed and drained)
 - › Corn
5. Add spices to taste:
 - › 2 Tbsp chili powder
 - › 1 tsp cumin
 - › 1 tsp dried oregano
6. Simmer for 15 minutes.

Tasty Chickpea Salad

1. Mix in a large bowl:
 - › Diced red onion
 - › Feta cheese
 - › Diced green pepper
 - › 1 can of chickpeas (drained and rinsed)
 - › Diced tomato
 - › Diced cucumber
2. Toss with bottled dressing or make your own dressing.
3. To make dressing, mix together:
 - › Olive oil
 - › Dried oregano
 - › Lemon juice
 - › Fresh ground pepper
 - › Minced garlic

Delicious Chili-spiced Baked Beans

1. Mix together:
 - › Baked beans
 - › Chopped red or green pepper
 - › Chopped tomato
 - › Kernel corn (fresh or canned)
 - › Chili powder to taste
 2. Heat and serve.
- For a change, spread the beans on a tortilla. Heat and serve with salsa and yogurt.

Chicken Noodle Soup with Healthy, Tasty Add-ins

1. Dice:
 - › Onion
 - › Garlic
 - › Celery
 - › Carrots
 2. Heat some oil in a pot.
 3. When the oil is warm enough, saute the onion, garlic, celery, and carrots in the pot.
 4. Add:
 - › 1 can of chicken noodle soup
 - › 1 can of white kidney beans (drained and rinsed)
 - › 2 cans of water (use one of the empty cans to measure)
 - › Dried herbs of your choice (like rosemary, thyme, and fresh ground pepper)
 5. Simmer for 10 minutes and serve. Add chopped baby spinach or kale right before serving.
- Store in the fridge for 2 to 3 days, or in the freezer for up to 4 months.

Other recipes

Hummus Dip

You can use hummus as a dip for vegetables, crackers, or pita bread. Spread it on pizza crust instead of tomato sauce. Use it on sandwiches or wraps.

- › 19 oz (540 ml) can chickpeas, drained
 - › 2 cloves garlic, minced
 - › ½ cup (125 ml) plain yogurt
 - › 3 Tbsp (45 ml) lemon juice, freshly squeezed
 - › ¼ tsp (1 ml) salt
 - › ½ tsp (2 ml) ground cumin (or more to taste)
 - › 2 Tbsp (30 ml) tahini (or peanut butter)
 - › Freshly ground pepper (to taste)
1. In a blender or a food processor, puree chickpeas with garlic until roughly chopped.
 2. Add yogurt, lemon juice, and seasonings. Blend to a smooth paste.
 3. Remove the hummus from the blender or food processor. Cover the hummus and put it in the fridge for at least 2 hours. This helps the flavour get stronger.
- Store in the fridge for up to 5 days.

Black Bean Quesadillas

- › 19 oz (540 ml) can black beans (drained and rinsed)
 - › 2 Tbsp (30 ml) salsa
 - › ½ tsp (2 ml) cumin and chili powder (optional)
 - › 8 small, whole-wheat flour tortillas
 - › 1 cup (250 ml) shredded cheese
 - › Diced red or green pepper
1. Preheat oven to 400 °F (205 °C).
 2. Mix spices into salsa. Mash black beans and salsa (or blend in a blender or a food processor).
 3. Divide onto 4 tortillas and spread evenly. Top each tortilla with some diced pepper and ¼ of the shredded cheese. Cover with leftover tortillas and bake for 5 to 7 minutes.
 4. Let cool for 5 minutes before cutting into triangles. Serve with salsa, sour cream, and half a plate of raw veggies.

Bean Salad

1. Drain and rinse each of the following and combine in a large bowl with onion.
 - › 19 oz (540 ml) can green beans
 - › 19 oz (540 ml) can yellow beans
 - › 19 oz (540 ml) can lima beans
 - › 19 oz (540 ml) can red kidney beans
 - › 19 oz (540 ml) can chickpeas
 - › 1 large onion, sliced thin

Dressing:

1. Mix in a covered container and pour over the beans.
 - › ¼ cup (50 ml) canola oil
 - › ½ cup (125 ml) sugar
 - › 1 cup (250 ml) vinegar (white or cider)
 - › Salt
 - › Pepper
 - › Thyme
 - › Oregano
 - › Garlic powder
 - › Dry mustard
 2. Stir the beans and dressing well before serving. Chill for at least 1 hour in the fridge. Bean salad tastes even better the day after it is made.
- Try mixing bean salad with a garden salad to add more vegetables to your meal.

Speedy Bean and Lentil Casserole

- › 1 Tbsp (15 ml) vegetable oil
- › 1 large onion, chopped
- › 2 stalks celery, sliced
- › 19 oz (540 ml) can kidney beans (drained and rinsed)
- › 19 oz (540 ml) can lentils (drained and rinsed) **or** 1 cup (250 ml) dry lentils, cooked
- › 19 oz (540 ml) can tomatoes, drained and chopped
- › ½ tsp (2 ml) dried rosemary or thyme
- › Pepper (to taste)
- › 1 cup (250 ml) shredded cheddar or mozzarella cheese
- › 1 Tbsp (15 ml) grated Parmesan cheese

Oven method:

1. In a flame-proof casserole dish, heat oil over medium heat.
2. Cook onion and celery until onion is softened.
3. Add beans, lentils, tomatoes, rosemary, and pepper to taste. Bring to a simmer.
4. Sprinkle with cheese and broil until cheese melts.

Microwave method:

1. In a microwaveable casserole dish, combine oil, onion, and celery.
2. Cover and cook at high power for 3 to 4 minutes or until onion is softened.
3. Add beans, lentils, tomatoes, rosemary, and pepper to taste.
4. Cover and microwave at high power for 5 minutes or until heated through.
5. Sprinkle with cheese and microwave until cheese melts and is bubbly.

- Makes 4 servings.

Old-fashioned Baked Beans

- › 1 pound (454 g) navy beans
 - › 2 medium onions
 - › ¼ cup (60 ml) molasses
 - › 2 Tbsp (30 ml) tomato paste **or** ½ cup (125 ml) ketchup
 - › 1 Tbsp (15 ml) brown sugar
 - › 1 Tbsp (15 ml) vinegar
 - › ¼ tsp (1 ml) salt
 - › ½ tsp (2 ml) dry mustard
 - › ¼ tsp (1 ml) black pepper
 - › 4 cups (1000 ml) hot water
 - › 2 slices bacon, chopped
1. Rinse the beans. Throw out any discoloured beans (beans that have turned grey or green). Soak the beans overnight, or quick soak (see page 2) in a large pot.
 2. Drain the beans.
 3. Add enough water to cover beans by at least 2 inches. Bring water to a boil. Simmer for 30 minutes.
 4. Drain the beans.
 5. Preheat oven to 250 °F (120 °C) or use a slow cooker.
 6. In a bean pot or an 8-cup casserole dish, spread onion slices.
 7. Mix together molasses, tomato paste, sugar, vinegar, salt, mustard, and pepper. Pour mixture into the bean pot or casserole dish.
 8. Add drained beans and hot water. Sprinkle with bacon.
 9. Cover and bake for 6 hours.
 10. Uncover and bake for 1 hour longer, adding water if needed to keep beans covered.
- Makes about 8 servings, about ¾ cup each.

Red Lentil Spaghetti Sauce

Red lentils cook quickly. This sauce can be made in about the same amount of time as a meat sauce.

- › 1 large onion, chopped
 - › 2 large celery stalks, chopped
 - › 2 cloves garlic, chopped or ½ tsp (2 ml) garlic powder
 - › 1 Tbsp (15 ml) vegetable oil
 - › 1 cup (250 ml) dried red lentils, rinsed
 - › 2 cups (500 ml) broth of choice or water
 - › 28 oz (798 ml) can tomatoes, crushed or diced, with half of a 5½ oz (156 ml) can tomato paste
 - › 1 Tbsp (15 ml) chopped fresh parsley or 1 tsp (5 ml) dried parsley
 - › ½ tsp (2 ml) dried oregano
 - › A pinch of cayenne pepper
 - › Grated Parmesan cheese
1. Heat oil in a large saucepan on medium to high heat. Add onion, celery, and garlic and cook for about 5 minutes or until tender.
 2. Add lentils and broth. Cover and cook on low for about 35 minutes, or until lentils are tender.
 3. Add crushed tomatoes and seasonings. Cook covered for about 15 minutes, or until lentils are soft and mushy.
 4. Serve over cooked spaghetti. Sprinkle with Parmesan cheese.

Chickpea and Sweet Potato Curry

- › 1 Tbsp (15 ml) vegetable oil
 - › 1 onion, finely chopped
 - › 2 garlic cloves, minced
 - › 2 Tbsp (30 ml) curry powder
 - › 1 tsp (5 ml) ground ginger
 - › 2 medium sweet potatoes, peeled and chopped into half-inch pieces
 - › 1 can (796 ml) of tomatoes, diced
 - › 1 can (540 ml) of chickpeas (drained and rinsed)
1. In a large saucepan on medium to high heat, cook onion and garlic in oil for about 2 minutes. Add curry powder and ginger. Cook another 2 minutes, stirring constantly.
 2. Add sweet potatoes and tomatoes. Bring to a boil, then cover and simmer on medium to low heat for 15 minutes.
 3. Stir in the chickpeas and cook for 10 minutes. The sweet potatoes should be tender.
 4. Enjoy over rice, quinoa, or other grains.
- Makes 6 servings.

Lentil Brownies

- › ½ cup (125 ml) non-hydrogenated margarine
- › ½ cup (125 ml) lentil puree*
- › ¾ cup (188 ml) cocoa
- › 1 ½ cups (375 ml) sugar
- › ¾ tsp (3 ml) salt
- › 3 eggs
- › 1 tsp (5 ml) vanilla
- › 1 cup (250 ml) flour
- › 1 cup (250 ml) chocolate chips
- › 1 cup (250 ml) walnuts (optional)

1. Preheat oven to 350 °F (175 °C).
2. Melt margarine.
3. Mix in lentil puree*, cocoa, sugar, and salt.
4. Add eggs, 1 at a time.
5. Mix in vanilla, flour, and chocolate chips (and walnuts, if using).
6. Bake in a greased 9 inch x 13 inch pan for 22 minutes, or until a toothpick put in the centre comes out clean.

***Lentil puree:**

1. Place cooked or rinsed and drained canned lentils into a food processor.
2. For every 1 cup of lentils, add ¼ cup of water.
3. Blend to make a smooth puree that has the thickness of canned pumpkin. If needed, add more water 1 Tbsp at a time.

Resources

To learn more about nutrition and pulses, visit the following websites:

Pulses

Recipes using pulses

› <http://pulses.org>

Lentils™

Recipes using lentils

› www.lentils.org

Dietitians of Canada

Information about nutrition, recipes, and how to find a dietitian

› www.dietitians.ca

UnlockFood.ca™

Information about nutrition and how to find a dietitian

› www.unlockfood.ca

Heart and Stroke Foundation

Information about heart disease and heart-healthy recipes

› www.heartandstroke.com

For more information about pulses in Canada, visit:

Pulse Canada

› <http://pulsecanada.com/>

Saskatchewan Pulse Growers

› <http://saskpulse.com>

