

PUMPKINS

Pumpkin Profile

- 1 cup of pureed pumpkin provides over 2x the recommended amount of Vitamin A! This vitamin is crucial to vision/eye health and also plays a role in immune function, skin and bone formation, and red blood cell formation.
- Pumpkins are packed with Vitamin K, which helps in blood clotting and building strong bones.
- Pumpkins are an excellent source of fiber to aid in digestion and gut health, provide sustained energy, and regulate blood sugar levels.
- Due to its nutrient profile, studies have shown that pumpkins may help prevent diabetes and heart disease, promote healthy skin, and maintain a healthy weight.
- The pumpkin seeds are also edible and contain additional health benefits! Just 1-oz. of roasted seeds is an excellent source of fiber, zinc, and magnesium. Both zinc and magnesium play a vital role in the nervous system and DNA synthesis.

Pumpkin Pun:

What do you use to mend a broken jack-o-lantern?
→ A pumpkin patch!



% DV in 1 cup Canned Pumpkin



Fun Pumpkin Facts:

- Pumpkins are members of the gourd family, which also includes cucumbers, melons, and squash and gourds.
- Pumpkins are native to Central America, where they have been grown for over 5,000 years!
- Shelled pumpkin seeds are called pepits, from the Spanish phrase “pepita de calabaza,” which translates to “little seed of squash.”
- The world’s heaviest pumpkin weighed over 2,600 lbs.! It was grown in Germany and presented in October 2016.
- Carving Jack-o’-Lanterns is a popular Halloween tradition that originated in Ireland. Potatoes or turnips were originally used for carving; it wasn’t until Irish immigrants arrived in America that they discovered pumpkins.



Make it at Home!

Roasted Pumpkin Seeds

After you carve pumpkins, don’t throw away the seeds! Save them to create a delicious and healthy snack!



Ingredients:

- 1 cup fresh pumpkin seeds (from 1 medium pumpkin), rinsed and patted dry
- 1 Tbsp vegetable oil
- ¼ tsp kosher salt
- 2-3 tsp desired seasonings (such as paprika and garlic, or cinnamon and nutmeg)

Directions:

- To separate seeds from pumpkin “guts”, place in a large bowl of water; seeds will float to the top. Skim and pat dry.
- Heat oven to 300° F. Spread the seeds on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper and bake until dry throughout, 50 to 60 minutes.
- Increase oven temperature to 350° F. In a large bowl, toss the seeds with the oil and desired spices.
- Return the seeds to the baking sheet and toast, tossing occasionally, until golden brown, 10 to 15 minutes. Enjoy!

Oh My Gourd!

These plump orange plants are a fall staple, packed with a cornucopia of nutrients. The seeds, flesh, and flowers are all edible, making it a versatile ingredient to many dishes. So put aside your PSL and check out all the ways pumpkins can be used in healthy meals and snacks!



Soups & Stews



Ethnic Curry & Stir-fry



Fruit Dishes & Desserts



Breakfast Oatmeal & Smoothies



Toasted Pumpkin Seeds



Roasted Mixed Veggies



Whole Grain Baked Goods

References:

- ❑ USDA Nutrient Database, 2018.
- ❑ History of the Jack O' Lantern. History.com, 2019.
- ❑ Rice, Diana K., RD. Perfectly Roasted Pumpkin Seeds. The Baby Steps Dietitian, 2019.
- ❑ Medicinal and biological potential of pumpkin: an updated review. *Nutrition Research Reviews* (2010). 23.