

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.

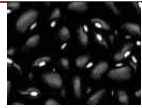
CHECK OUT SOME VARIETIES OF LEGUMES DESCRIBED BELOW!



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!