



PUMPKINS THE COLOR OF FALL

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Nothing says “fall” like a visit to a pumpkin patch. You already know that pumpkins can be used to make great jack-o-lanterns at Halloween, decorate your home for the fall season, and who can forget the pumpkin pie? But did you know that there is much more to them than that?

A pumpkin's vibrant orange color gives us an important clue about its health benefits: pumpkins are an excellent source of beta carotene. Our bodies transform beta carotene into Vitamin A and reap its rewards, making us less likely to develop certain cancers as well as other diseases. One cup of mashed pumpkin contains 49 calories, 0.2 grams of fat, 0 milligrams of cholesterol, 7 grams of fiber and 2,651 International Units (IU) of Vitamin A. One ounce of pumpkin seeds contains 153 calories, 13 grams of fat, 0 milligrams of cholesterol ½ gram of fiber and 108 IU of Vitamin A. So basically, it's really good stuff. Pumpkins are equally

delectable served as a vegetable, pureed as soup, cooked into stews or baked into breads, cakes, and muffins.

When choosing pumpkins for cooking stay away from the large field pumpkins, traditionally used in jack-o-lantern carving, since these pumpkins are too large and stringy for cooking and baking. Choose small “pie” or “sweet” pumpkins because their flesh is sweeter and less stringy. The American Dietetics Association recommends choosing pumpkins that do not have blemishes and to store whole pumpkins at room temperature up to a month or refrigerate up to three months.

There are many ways to cook fresh pumpkin; you can choose to bake, steam, or microwave. Always start by cutting the pumpkin in half and removing the seeds. Remember to save those seeds for roasting! When the pumpkin is cooked and cooled, peel it from the outer shell using a small, sharp knife. Cut the pieces so that they are small enough to fit into a blender, or food processor, and puree until smooth. You can also use a food mill, ricer, or potato masher to create the puree. A medium-sized (4-pound) sugar pumpkin should yield around 1½ cups of mashed pumpkin. A 15 oz. can of pumpkin is equal to 1 ¾ cups of pumpkin puree. This puree can be used in all your recipes calling for canned pumpkin. Once you have your puree, enjoy the following delicious recipe.

For more information, contact a registered dietitian at www.eatrightwv.org.



Multi-Grain Pumpkin Muffins

12 Cupcake Size Muffins*	Ingredients
½ cups	Whole Wheat Flour
1 cup	All Purpose Flour
¾ cup	Ground Flax
¾ cup	Oatmeal
½ cup	Brown Sugar
1 tsp.	Baking Soda
1 tsp.	Baking Powder
2 tsp.	Cinnamon
1 cup	Pumpkin, canned
½ cup	Raisins
1/3 cup & 1 Tbsp.	Egg Substitute*
2 Tbsp.	Unsweetened Applesauce
1 tsp.	Vanilla
1 cup	Skim Milk
1 Tbsp.	Lemon Juice

Mix dry ingredients. Stir in raisins. Combine eggs, pumpkin, milk, lemon juice, applesauce and vanilla in separate bowl. Add liquids to dry ingredients; stir until moist (batter will be lumpy). Portion #12 scoop batter (1/3 cup) into muffin tins sprayed with Pam.

Bake in a preheated 350 degree convection oven. (At home, bake at 375 degrees) until a toothpick inserted in the center of a muffin comes out clean (approximately 25 minutes). Cool 5 minutes in tin.

Nutrition Facts per muffin: **Calories** 170, **Total Fat** 3.5g, Saturated Fat 0g, Trans Fat 0g, **Cholesterol** 0mg, **Sodium** 170mg, **Total Carbohydrate** 31g, Dietary Fiber 4g, Sugars 12g, **Protein** 6g, Vitamin A 70%, Vitamin C 2%, Calcium 6%, Iron 10%.

Recipe from HSC Cafeterias, WVUH

**Can substitute 2 eggs for the egg substitute.*