

LENTILS

Lentils are nutritious powerhouses rich in fibre, protein and contain vitamins and minerals such as folate, potassium and iron.



HOW TO CHOOSE

- Choose dried lentils that have brightly coloured, smooth skins, without shrivels
- Avoid cans of lentils that are dented, bulging or leaking.

HOW TO PREPARE

- To cook dry lentils (rinsed), use 2 – 2 ½ cups (500 – 625 mL) water for every cup (250 mL) of dried lentils. Then follow one of these methods:
- Conventional Cooking: In a large saucepan, combine dried lentils and water. Cover and bring to a full boil. Reduce heat and simmer until tender (10 to 30 minutes).
- Microwave Cooking: In a microwaveable dish combine dried lentils and water. Cover and cook on high until tender (5 to 10 minutes).
- Canned lentils: Rinse prior to eating/cooking to reduce sodium content.
- Cooked lentils that have been cooled and canned lentils can both be rinsed and eaten raw or added to a lentil salad with a splash of vinegar and pepper to taste.

HOW TO STORE

- Dry lentils in tightly sealed containers stored in a cool, dark and dry area can be kept for years. However, the longer lentils are stored the drier they will become which increases their cooking time. Therefore, it's best to use within 1 year.
- Canned lentils can be stored in a cool, dry place (can be stored up to 1 year).
- After lentils are cooked, drain, cool, cover and store in the fridge for up to 5 days.

For more information, visit thefoodbank.ca/food

NUTRIENT SPOTLIGHT: FOLATE

1 cup of cooked whole lentils provides 90% of an individual's daily value of folate. It is especially important that pregnant women get enough folate to help support the growth and development of their baby.

Folate assists in red blood cell production, maintains a healthy heart, and prevents birth defects in women of child bearing age and those that are pregnant

Sources:

Legumes (beans, peas, lentils), vegetables (tomato juice, spinach, broccoli and corn), fruit (cantaloupe, raspberries, bananas, orange, pineapple and grapefruit juices), enriched grain products (pasta, cereals and bread) peanut butter and sunflower seeds.

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HEARTY LENTIL SOUP

Serves: 4 | Prep: 10 mins | Cook: 25 mins

Difficulty level: Moderate



INGREDIENTS

- 1 tsp. vegetable oil (or any oil of preference)
- 1 cup washed and chopped onion
- 2 tsp. dried rosemary (can substitute with dried thyme, oregano or Italian seasoning – optional to leave out)
- 2 cups washed and chopped sweet potato (can substitute for butternut squash or any type of potato)
- ½ tsp. salt
- 1 cup dried split lentils
- 3 cups water
- 1 (15 ounce) can diced tomatoes (rinsed)
- 3 cups washed and chopped kale or collard greens (can substitute with spinach or any type of chopped lettuce)

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Heat oil in a soup pot over medium heat.
2. Add onion, herbs and salt. Cook for 3 minutes.
3. Add sweet potato, lentils, water and diced tomatoes. Stir to mix. Bring the soup to a boil, then reduce to a simmer.
4. Cover soup pot partially with a lid. Cook for 15 minutes, until lentils are tender.
5. Add greens. Stir to mix. Cook for 5 minutes.

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Recipe adapted from hungerandhealth.feedingamerica.org

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