

PUMPKIN DELIGHTS

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Nutrition in a Pumpkin Shell

Pumpkin is one the “deep yellow” colored vegetables from the Fruit & Vegetable Group. It is especially rich in Vitamin A needed by our bodies for good eyesight and healthy skin. Pumpkin is low in calories. It can be cut into serving size pieces, baked and served plain or brushed with butter or margarine and sprinkled with salt and pepper to serve with a meat dish.

Other vegetables in this food group, which are also rich in Vitamin A, include carrots, sweet potatoes, yams, winter squash, red peppers, broccoli, spinach, collards, mustard, turnips and other greens.

Pumpkin Pickers’ Pointers

Fun squash time is here. What’s fun squash? It’s what Cinderella used for a coach and what Linus eagerly waits for in his humble patch. It’s Halloween’s grinning “Jack” and Thanksgiving’s scrumptious pie...It’s pumpkin.

Types of Pumpkins

There are two types of pumpkins. The Jumbo (or field variety) is perfect for making Jack-O-Lanterns. The sugar (or pie variety) makes delicious pies. Confusing the two creates problems—a stringy pie or a Jack-O-Lantern that’s stubborn to carve.

Jumbo – The Jumbo variety are the large pumpkins. They are 12-15 inches in diameter and usually weigh between 10-90 pounds, although larger ones can be found. The “orangeish”-yellow flesh is somewhat stringy, coarse and dry. They are not very sweet tasting either.

Sugar – The Sugar pumpkin variety is smaller. They are usually 10-12 inches in diameter and weigh about 6-8 pounds. The yellowish-orange flesh is fine-textured and sweet. Sugars have a dense, thick

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wall, which makes carving Jack-O-Lanterns extra hard, and the candle can't shine through for the dramatic "eerie" effect. Although Jumbo pumpkins can be used for making pies, the Sugars give a better flavor to the finished product.

Selecting a Pumpkin

When choosing pumpkins, whether perfectly round or delightfully lopsided, select one that is flattened on the ends. (Tipping over a lit Jack-O-Lantern can bring disastrous results.) Look for mature pumpkins with a rich, orange color. Avoid ones that are broken or cracked. Make sure they are clear and free of soft spots and excessive scarring. The rind should be hard. Choose a pumpkin that is heavy for its size.

Storing

If you want to store a few pumpkins for later use, you might want to wait until just after Halloween. Prices on remaining supplies are generally reduced after the demand has passed. The best pumpkins last 2-3 months under ideal storage conditions. Store only blemish-free pumpkins with no signs of decay. Handle carefully. Store in a moderately cool, dry, well-ventilated place at temperatures around 50-60°F, and they will keep from 2-6 months.

Yield

One pound of raw pumpkin yields $\frac{3}{4}$ - 1 cup of cooked mashed pumpkin. It takes $1\frac{1}{2}$ - 2 cups cooked pumpkin for a well-filled 9-inch pie.

Preparing Pumpkin

For each following method, cut a pumpkin into four pieces and set in pans with rind side on the bottom. Remove seeds and stringy portions.

Boiled – Boil prepared pumpkin in a covered pan with a small amount of water until tender, about 25-30 minutes. After cooking, peel, drain and puree.

Baked – Seal prepared pumpkin in foil and bake at 350°F until soft, about 1 – $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours. Scoop pulp from shell and puree.

Steamed – Place prepared pumpkin on a wire rack or metal colander over boiling water in a covered container. Steam until tender, about 40-50 minutes. Remove from steam, peel and puree as directed.

Puree – Fresh pumpkin puree can be used in all recipes calling for canned pumpkin. To make the puree, simply halve or quarter the pumpkin, removing seeds and stringy portions. Boil, bake or steam according to directions. Scoop softened pulp out of rind and mash well. Place mashed pumpkin into a strainer. Allow pumpkin to drain about 30 minutes. If necessary, it may be put through a sieve. If puree is too watery, gently cook on stovetop stirring almost constantly to avoid scorching, until the pumpkin cooks down to desired consistency.

Pumpkin Bean Soup

2 cups white beans	$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp black pepper
$\frac{1}{4}$ cup salt pork OR	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup diced celery
$\frac{1}{4}$ cup ham OR	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup shredded carrots
$\frac{1}{4}$ cup bacon	2 cups pumpkin, peeled
1 onion, diced	& cubed in 1-inch squares
	Crushed red pepper to taste

Soak the beans overnight. Cook beans in 2 quarts of fresh boiling water with the salt pork, ham or bacon, and onion, black pepper, celery, carrots and red pepper. Add pumpkin cubes when beans are tender. Continue cooking until the pumpkin is tender. Remove the pumpkin and mash. Return the pumpkin pulp to the soup and blend well, stirring until thickened. Serve hot.

Makes 8 generous servings.

Note: this soup may be made the day before and stored in refrigerator overnight. Reheat before serving.

Pumpkin Cake #1

4 eggs	2 tsp baking soda
1 cup oil	3 tsp cinnamon
2 cups sugar	2 tsp baking powder
2 cups pumpkin	1 tsp salt
2 cups flour	1 tsp vanilla
1 cup chopped nuts (optional)	

Beat all ingredients until well blended. Pour into greased and floured 10-inch tube pan. Bake at 350°F for 1 hour.

Cake may be served plain or frosted with a glaze icing. The Cookie Topping recipe goes nicely with this cake.

This cake may be made ahead of time and wrapped in foil and put in freezer for several weeks.

Pumpkin Cake #2

1 package spice cake mix	¾ cup canned pumpkin
2 eggs	½ cup finely chopped nuts (optional)
	Water

Combine cake mix and eggs. Add ¼ cup **less** water than called for on cake mix instructions. Add pumpkin and mix. Stir in nuts. Pour into greased and floured pan. Bake at 350°F for 40-45 minutes.

You may bake this in a 9x13 oblong pan OR an angel food tube pan. This cake may be served with or without frosting.

For persimmon cake: substitute ¾ cup persimmon pulp for pumpkin.

For the Microwave

Pumpkin Cheese Cake

1 9-inch graham cracker pie crust	1 cup pumpkin
1 12-oz package cream cheese, softened (you may microwave on HIGH for approx. 1 minute to soften)	¾ cup sugar OR add sugar to taste
	½ tsp grated lemon OR orange peel
	3 eggs

Mix together with wire whip or beater. Pour into pie crust. Cook on HIGH for 8-12 minutes. Check every 4 minutes, turning ¼ turn until firm. Cool before serving.

Topping

1 cup sour cream OR yogurt	1 tsp vanilla
2 tbsp sugar	1 grated lemon peel

Mix ingredients and put on pie. Cook on HIGH for 2 minutes, turning ¼ turn after 1 minute. Refrigerate.



Pumpkin Bread

3½ cups sifted flour	¾ cup water
3 cups sugar	4 eggs
1½ tsp cinnamon	1 cup oil
½ tsp nutmeg	2 cups pumpkin
2 tsp baking soda	1 cup chopped nuts (optional)
1½ tsp salt	

Sift together flour, sugar, cinnamon, nutmeg, baking soda and salt in a large bowl. Make a well in the center of sifted ingredients and add water, eggs, oil, pumpkin and nuts. Mix well. Pour batter into greased containers. Bake at 350°F for 1 hour or until loaves test done.

Makes three 9½ x5x3 OR one 9x13x2 and one 8-inch square OR three 9-inch rounds.

Baked loaves can be stored in the freezer for several weeks. Grated raw OR mashed cooked carrots, sweet potatoes, squash, persimmon pulp, mashed bananas, applesauce or other fruit puree may be used to replace pumpkin in this recipe.

Pumpkin Nut Muffins

2½ cups flour	1 tsp cinnamon
2 cups sugar	½ tsp ground cloves
1 tsp baking soda	½ cup salad oil
½ tsp salt	½ cup coarsely chopped walnuts
1 1-pound can pumpkin OR 2 cups fresh cooked pumpkin	

Mix all ingredients together and fill muffin cups ¾ full. Bake at 350°F for 30 minutes. Makes 1½ dozen muffins.

These muffins may be made ahead of time and put in a covered container in the freezer for several weeks.

Pumpkin Bars

1-2/3 cups sugar	2 tsp baking powder
1 cup oil	1 tsp baking soda
4 eggs	2 tsp cinnamon
2 cups canned pumpkin	1 tsp salt
2 cups flour	

1 recipe for Frosting (see below)

Cream together sugar, oil, eggs and pumpkin. Sift together flour, baking powder, baking soda, cinnamon and salt. Thoroughly combine dry ingredients with creamed mixture. Pour batter into jellyroll pan. Bake at 350°F for 30 minutes. Cool before frosting.

Frosting

1 3-oz package cream cheese	1 tsp vanilla
¾ stick butter OR margarine	1½ cups powdered sugar
2 tsp milk OR cream	

Cream together cheese and butter. Add vanilla and combine thoroughly. Add sugar a little at a time, combining thoroughly. Add cream and blend until smooth.

The amount of powdered sugar can be altered to obtain texture desired.

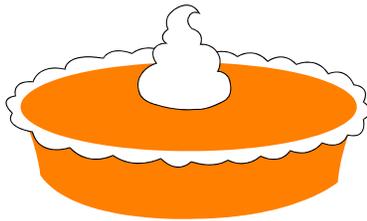


Famous Pumpkin Pie

2 8- or 9-inch unbaked pie shells	1¼ tsp cinnamon
4 eggs, slightly beaten	1 tsp ginger
3 cups cooked pumpkin OR 1 large can pumpkin	½ tsp ground cloves
1¼ cups sugar	2¼ cups evaporated milk OR light cream
¾ tsp salt	

Mix ingredients in order given and pour into unbaked pie shells. Bake at 425°F for 15 minutes. Reduce temperature to 350°F and continue baking for 45 minutes or until knife inserted in center of pie comes out clean.

Just before serving, you may cover cooled pie with a thin layer of sweetened whipped cream and sprinkle with chopped nuts.



Cavalier Pumpkin Pie

1 10-inch pie crust	¼ tsp ginger
1 cup milk	¼ tsp allspice
2/3 cup seedless raisins	½ tsp salt
1 cup light brown sugar	2 cups heavy cream
2 cups canned pumpkin	4 eggs, slightly beaten
½ tsp cinnamon	1½ cups broken pecan meats

Line 10-inch pie plate with pastry and crimp the edges. Scald milk. Add raisins and sugar to milk and let stand. In a large bowl, mix pumpkin, spices, salt and 1 cup cream. Add raisin-sugar-milk mixture and blend well. Add eggs and mix again. Fold in pecans and pour mixture into pie shell. Bake at 350°F for 1 hour or until center is set. Decorate with whipped cream.

Spicy Pumpkin Pie

2 cups mashed pumpkin (canned or fresh)	¾ cup sugar
¾ tsp salt	¼ cup brown sugar
1-2/3 cups canned evaporated milk	1 tsp melted butter OR margarine
2 eggs	1 – 1¼ tsp cinnamon
	1 tsp allspice

Mix all ingredients together and put into unbaked pie crust. Bake in a 450°F oven for 15 minutes, then bake at 350°F for 45 minutes or until knife comes out clean when inserted.

For Sweet Potato Pie, instead of pumpkin, use 2 cups cooked, mashed sweet potatoes and follow the same directions for baking.

Pie Crust

1 cup flour	½ tsp salt
1/3 cup shortening	5 tbsp ice water OR cold milk
1/8 tsp baking powder	

Blend dry ingredients together, add shortening, and cut into pea-size pieces. Add water (or milk) and mix. Roll out on floured board and put into a 9-inch pie pan; crimp the edges on the pie dough. Pour in pumpkin filling and bake.



Pumpkin Cookies

1 cup sugar	1 tsp baking powder
1 cup shortening	1 tsp baking soda
1 egg	1 tsp cinnamon
1 cup canned pumpkin OR 1 cup fresh pumpkin	½ tsp salt
2 cups flour	1 cup chopped nuts
	1 cup chopped dates or raisins
	1 tsp vanilla

Cream sugar and shortening, add egg and pumpkin. Mix in next five ingredients. Add nuts, dates and vanilla. Drop from teaspoons onto cookie sheet. Bake 12-15 minutes at 350°F. Cool.

Yield: 5 dozen cookies.



Cookie Topping

2½ tbsp soft butter OR margarine	1½ tsp milk OR cream
1½ cups sifted powdered sugar	¾ tsp vanilla

Blend butter and sugar together. Stir in cream and vanilla until smooth. Will frost 4 dozen cookies.

Pumpkin Custard

3 eggs	¼ tsp nutmeg
¼ cup sugar	¼ tsp salt
2 cups milk OR 2/3 cup dry milk powder + 1½ cups water	½ tsp cinnamon
1 cup pumpkin puree	1 tsp vanilla

Beat eggs slightly. Add sugar, milk, pumpkin, and salt. Add spices and vanilla. Pour custard into individual custard cups (or into a pan) and set in a larger pan of hot water. Bake at 325°F until knife comes out clean when inserted.

Pumpkin Butter

16 cups prepared pumpkin	8 cups sugar
1 cup lemon juice	4 tsp cinnamon

Combine all ingredients. Simmer mixture on stovetop, approximately 1½ hours, until butter is thick or when a tablespoon put on a cold dish does not separate at edge into a runny liquid. During cooking, stir frequently to prevent burning. Pour into hot, clean jars within ½ inch of top. Put on two-piece canning lid and screw band, firmly tighten. Process in boiling water bath for 10 minutes.

Makes approximately 12 8-ounce jars.

Pumpkin Ice Cream

1 envelope unflavored gelatin	1 tbsp cinnamon
1½ cups sugar	1 tbsp vanilla
4 cups half & half	2 tsp ground ginger
½ tsp salt	½ tsp ground cloves
1 egg, lightly beaten	
1 large can pumpkin (29 oz) OR 3¾ cups mashed, freshly cooked pumpkin	

In a 3-quart pan, stir together the gelatin, sugar, half & half, salt and egg. Cook over medium heat, stirring, until gelatin is dissolved, set aside.

In a large bowl, stir together the pumpkin, cinnamon, vanilla, ginger and cloves. Gradually stir in gelatin mixture until blended. Pour into ice cream freezer can (no more than 2/3 full), cover and refrigerate until well chilled.

Assemble freezer with ice and salt according to manufacturer's directions. When hand cranking becomes difficult or motor stalls, remove dasher, cover can and store in freezer—at least 1 hour. Makes 1½ quarts.

Pumpkin Seeds Pepitas (Roasted Pumpkin Seeds)

Bring to a boil, 1-1/3 cups water and 3 tablespoons salt stirring until salt is completely dissolved. Pour over ½ pound (1-2/3 cups) raw, hulled pumpkin seeds placed in a bowl. Cover and let stand at room temperature 12 to 24 hours.

Drain liquid from seeds. Spread seeds evenly over a 10x15-inch baking pan. Bake in a 350°F oven for 25 to 35 minutes (seeds that soak 24 hours require maximum time) or until seeds are dry and puffed (the kernel separates in the center). Stir frequently. Let cool, stirring occasionally. Store airtight. Roasted pumpkin seeds stay fresh up to 10 days.

To Add Flavor To Your Seeds...

Follow the directions for roasted pumpkin seeds except omit the 3 tablespoons salt from boiling water. After draining soaked seeds, sprinkle with 2 teaspoons of onion salt, garlic salt, or ¾ teaspoons each of chili powder and salt. Mix well until distributed. Bake as directed.

