



Enjoy Oatmeal for your Health



Many different foods are highlighted during a specific month of the year. National Oatmeal Month is

celebrated in January, but oatmeal is so significant that February 11 is designated 'Oatmeal Monday'. This gives us a second chance to recognize and enjoy this healthy, delicious, comfort food. This food has health benefits that should be appreciated year round.

Why Eat Oatmeal?



Oatmeal is a good source of fiber which promotes heart health and good digestion.



Oats are a whole grain and whole grains as a part of a low fat diet help protect against chronic diseases and may help maintain a healthy weight.



Oats were the first grain recognized by the Food and Drug Administration to help reduce blood cholesterol levels.



Oats contain protein and antioxidants as well as a variety of vitamins and minerals.



Oats add flavor and texture to favorite baked goods and to toppings for fruit crisps.



Oats are quick and easy. Oats are available in a variety of forms including steel cut, old fashion oats, quick oats and instant oats and take from one minute to five minutes to cook. The nutritional value is the same, the only difference is the way the oat has been cut and/or rolled.



Oats are versatile. In addition to being good for breakfast they can be used in many other ways. Added to meatloaf/meatballs, as a coating for chicken and fish, and as a partial flour replacement when baking. Quick or old fashioned oats can be substituted for up to 1/3 of the flour called for in recipes for muffins, biscuits, pancakes, quick breads, coffeecakes, yeast breads, cookies and bars.

Here are a couple of recipes to help you expand your use of oatmeal.

Oatmeal Soup

1 cup regular oatmeal (not quick-cooking or instant)
2 tablespoons butter or margarine
1/2 cup chopped onion
2 cloves garlic, minced
4 cups chicken broth
1 large tomato seeded and chopped
Salt and pepper to taste

Toast the oatmeal in a large heavy skillet over medium heat, stirring frequently, until it is browned, but not burned, about 10 minutes. Set aside.

Melt the butter or margarine in a 4-quart sauce pan; add the onions and sauté until softened, adding the garlic for the last two minutes. Add the chicken broth, tomato and toasted oatmeal. Bring to a simmer and cook for about 10 minutes. Season with salt and pepper. Makes 6 servings

Nutrition information per serving: 180 calories, 7 g fat, 15 mg cholesterol, 450 mg sodium, 4 g fiber, 23 g carbohydrate.

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Oven Oatmeal

2 cups uncooked oatmeal (old-fashioned or quick cooking oats)
1/2 cup brown sugar, packed
1/3 cup dried fruit (raisins, cranberries, cherries or others)
1/4 cup nuts, chopped
1 teaspoon baking powder
1-1/2 cups low fat milk
1/2 cup applesauce
2 tablespoons oil
1 egg

Preheat oven to 375°F. Spray an 8-inch square baking pan with non-stick spray.

In a bowl combine oatmeal, brown sugar, dried fruit, nuts and baking powder. In a separate bowl combine the milk, applesauce, oil and egg.

Add liquid ingredients to the dry ingredients, mix thoroughly. Pour into prepared pan. Bake for 20 minutes or until golden brown on top and set. Serve warm or cold. Refrigerate leftovers, use within 4 days. Makes 8 servings.

Nutrition information per serving: 240 calories, 8 g fat, 32 mg cholesterol, 37 g carbohydrate, 3 g fiber and 95 mg sodium.

