



2ND HELPING

Just a Little More Help from **United Way Meals on Wheels** October 2024

Spilling the Beans on Good Nutrition

Many Beans Are a Great Source of Protein, Fiber and Vitamins

When we say someone is "full of beans," it means that person is energetic and lively. Turns out that's not just an expression. Beans can be an important part of a healthy diet, providing essential nutrients that may reduce cholesterol and blood sugar levels while also helping with digestion. Here are some of the healthiest beans and legumes to try adding to your regular diet.

▪ **Chickpeas**

Also known as garbanzo beans, chickpeas are a great, low-calorie source of fiber, protein and minerals including iron. Hummus is made primarily from chickpeas and has been found to reduce post-meal blood sugar while supporting good gut bacteria and curbing your appetite.

▪ **Lentils**

Lentils are one of the most iron-rich legumes, which is especially helpful if you're vegan or vegetarian. Similar to chickpeas, lentils can also help reduce blood sugar levels. As a bonus, they may even help reduce bad cholesterol and increase the good kind.

▪ **Peas**

Peas are legumes that contain protein, fiber and micronutrients. They promote healthy digestion and heart health, including lower blood pressure; and they can help build muscle.

▪ **Kidney Beans**

As one of the most commonly consumed beans, kidney beans are low in fat and high in fiber, protein and a whole host of heart-healthy vitamins and minerals.

▪ **Black Beans**

Black beans are an excellent source of complex carbohydrates as well as fiber and protein. They're often eaten in combination with rice -- a *refined* carbohydrate that can cause blood sugar to spike. Thanks to their low glycemic index, however, black beans can offset that effect.

▪ **Peanuts**

Did you know that peanuts are actually legumes rather than nuts? They're a good source of monounsaturated fats, polyunsaturated fats, protein and vitamins. Peanuts may be beneficial to heart health, but they're also high in calories...so enjoy them in moderation.

Questions for Meals on Wheels? Call us at 205.592.0413.

source: healthline.com

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