

The Healthy Benefit of Beans and Legumes

Beans are an inexpensive and delicious food that you will want to keep stocked in your pantry because of their numerous health and longevity benefits. Here are some of the advantages of a bean-rich diet.

Make Room for Beans and Legumes

People in the United States eat a diet that is very high in fat, often amounting to 40 – 50 percent of their total daily calories. High-fat animal-derived foods have been linked with cancer time and time again.

Your body needs fat, so choose to eat the foods that have the good kind of fat. Beans and legumes are an unusually good choice, because in addition to providing the good fat, they are also chock full of protein and dietary fiber. They are also loaded with complex carbohydrates, the nutrients that are responsible for providing energy to the muscles and brain.

Because they have a low glycemic index, beans have the unique ability to provide energy over a sustained period of time by being slowly released into your blood stream. Also, beans are a great source of dietary fiber, which promotes a healthy digestive tract, helps lower blood cholesterol levels, and can reduce the risk of some types of cancer.

Be a Bean Keeper

Beans pack a powerful and tasty punch at a low price—better still, beans and legumes can be stored for a relatively long period of time. They will keep their quality for 6–12 months, perhaps even longer, if stored correctly. It is perfectly fine to store them in the unopened plastic bag that they come in. Also, you can transfer the beans to an airtight glass or metal container and store in a cool, dry place (but not the refrigerator.) Remember, the beans may take on or lose moisture, which can affect the soaking and cooking time.

To reduce flatulence and intestinal symptoms associated with eating beans, cook with herbs and spices such as fennel, anise, turmeric, lemongrass, dill, oregano, rosemary, cilantro, and bay leaf.