



A Nutrition Resource

# LENTILS

Lentils are actually edible seeds and are part of the legume family. There are a number of varieties: brown, green, puy, yellow, red, and beluga. Each type of lentil offers its own variation of nutrients, such as antioxidants and phytochemicals, but they are all an excellent source of protein, folate, iron, and fiber, among other vitamins and minerals.

## Buying and storing

### BUYING

When buying dried lentils, look for bright colored lentils with a uniform size and smooth skins and without chips or shriveled skin.

### STORING

Store in an unopened package or air-tight container in a cool, dark, dry place. Cooked lentils store well for up to 3 days in the refrigerator or for several months in the freezer.

## Preparing and Cooking

Lentils do not require soaking. To prepare for cooking, just remove any shriveled or broken seeds, dried soil, or pebbles, then place in a strainer and rinse.

### STOVETOP

Combine 1 cup dried lentils with 2 cups of water. Bring the water to a rapid boil, then reduce heat and simmer gently. Cook uncovered for about 20-30 minutes. Add water as needed to make sure lentils are just barely covered. Lentils are cooked as soon as they are tender and no longer crunchy. Drain well.

## Ways to enjoy

Lentils are versatile. They can be used in a variety of soups, salads, casseroles, and desserts.

- Mix cooked lentils into **salad**.
- **Make lentil soup:** Sauté 1 diced onion and 1 sliced carrot in 1 teaspoon vegetable oil. Add 4 cups vegetable broth, 1 cup dry lentils, ¼ teaspoon pepper, ¼ teaspoon dried thyme, and a dash of salt. Simmer until lentils are soft, about 45 minutes. Stir in 1 Tablespoon lemon juice.
- Lentils can **replace ground beef** in many recipes, such as taco filling, sloppy joes, and pasta sauce.
- **Make lentil hummus:** In a food processor, add 2 cups cooked lentils, 1 cup cooked or canned and drained garbanzo beans, 1/4 cup plain yogurt, 1 Tablespoon lemon juice, 1 clove crushed garlic, salt, and pepper. Pulse several times until finely chopped. Scrape down the sides then process on low, adding 1-2 tablespoons of olive oil slowly while the motor is running. Chill hummus in a bowl or container for at least 1 hour. Serve with veggie sticks or add to sandwiches.

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## Lentil Chili

**Yield: 6 Servings | Serving Size: 1 Cup**

- ½ pound lean ground beef
- 1½ cups chopped onion
- 1 clove garlic, crushed
- 2 cups cooked, drained lentils (or canned, drained and rinsed)
- 1-29 ounce can or 2-14.5-ounce cans diced or crushed tomatoes
- 1 Tablespoon chili powder
- ½ teaspoon (or more, to taste) ground cumin (optional)
- ½ teaspoon salt
- Chili toppings (optional)

1. In a large saucepan, brown beef over medium-high heat, breaking it into bite sized pieces. Drain fat.
2. Add onion and garlic and cook until softened.
3. Add lentils, tomatoes, chili powder, cumin (if using), and salt. Cook for about 1 hour until flavors are blended.
4. Serve hot, topped with your favorite chili toppings (optional).

**Variation:** Leave out the ground beef for a vegetarian version.

Nutrition Facts	
6 servings per container	
<b>Serving size</b>	<b>1 cup (283g)</b>
<b>Amount per serving</b>	
<b>Calories</b>	<b>170</b>
<b>% Daily Value*</b>	
<b>Total Fat</b> 2g	<b>3%</b>
Saturated Fat 0.5g	<b>3%</b>
Trans Fat 0g	
<b>Cholesterol</b> 20mg	<b>7%</b>
<b>Sodium</b> 560mg	<b>24%</b>
<b>Total Carbohydrate</b> 24g	<b>9%</b>
Dietary Fiber 7g	<b>25%</b>
Total Sugars 7g	
Includes 0g Added Sugars	<b>0%</b>
<b>Protein</b> 15g	
Vitamin D 0mcg	<b>0%</b>
Calcium 48mg	<b>4%</b>
Iron 4mg	<b>20%</b>
Potassium 330mg	<b>8%</b>
*The % Daily Value tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.	

## Lentil Patties

**Yield: 2 Servings | Serving Size: 8 small patties**

- 1 cup cooked, drained lentils (or canned, drained and rinsed)
- 1 egg, beaten
- 1/8 teaspoon onion salt
- ½ teaspoon vegetable oil

1. Blend cooked lentils, egg, and onion salt
2. Heat oil in frying pan on medium heat.
3. Drop lentil mixture by tablespoonfuls into frying pan. Press flat and cook over medium heat. Flip to cook other side.
4. Serve warm. If desired, serve with a whole grain roll and a salad for a light lunch or dinner.

**Tip:** Patties can also be rolled in cornmeal or breadcrumbs before cooking.

Nutrition Facts	
2 servings per container	
<b>Serving size</b>	<b>8 small patties (122g)</b>
<b>Amount per serving</b>	
<b>Calories</b>	<b>160</b>
<b>% Daily Value*</b>	
<b>Total Fat</b> 3.5g	<b>4%</b>
Saturated Fat 1g	<b>5%</b>
Trans Fat 0g	
<b>Cholesterol</b> 80mg	<b>27%</b>
<b>Sodium</b> 150mg	<b>7%</b>
<b>Total Carbohydrate</b> 20g	<b>7%</b>
Dietary Fiber 8g	<b>29%</b>
Total Sugars 2g	
Includes 0g Added Sugars	<b>0%</b>
<b>Protein</b> 12g	
Vitamin D 0mcg	<b>0%</b>
Calcium 31mg	<b>2%</b>
Iron 4mg	<b>20%</b>
Potassium 396mg	<b>8%</b>
*The % Daily Value tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.	

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