5 *Reasons to Eat More Beans*

Why the fuss over beans? And by beans, we also mean peas, lentils, and other legumes. We can think of five "beanefits" to start with.

1.They're packed with fiber, potassium, magnesium, folate, and iron. These are nutrients a lot of people don't get enough of.

2. Cholesterol. Beans lower LDL ("bad") cholesterol, probably because they're rich in the gummy, soluble type of fiber that does that.

3. Blood pressure. Beans help lower blood pressure, possibly because they're a decent source of potassium. Bonus: their magnesium may help prevent type 2 diabetes.

4. Regularity. Beans contain less water than fruits and vegetables, which makes them a more concentrated source of fiber. Expect 6 or 7 grams of fiber in half a cup of most beans. The same amount of most veggies or fruits has 1 to 3 grams.

5. Plant protein. Beans are rich in protein. Getting your protein from beans instead of from red meat like beef or pork can help lower your risk of colorectal cancer, heart disease, and type 2 diabetes. It also helps fight climate change.

Red Beans & Rice

- 2 Tbs. olive oil
- 1 bunch scallions, chopped
- 1 yellow pepper, chopped
- 2 cups cooked brown rice
- 1 15 oz. can no-salt-added red kidney beans, drained
- 2 fully cooked chicken or turkey sausages, chopped
- ¼ tsp. kosher salt

Per serving (1½ cups): calories 330
total fat 9 g | sat fat 2 g | carbs 45 g
fiber 12 g | protein 19 g | sodium 440 mg

Directions

1. In a large non-stick pan, heat the oil over medium heat until shimmering hot.

2. Stir in the scallions (or onion) and pepper. Cook, stirring often, until they start to brown, 3-5 minutes.

3. Stir in the rice, beans, and sausage (or rice and beans) and heat through, 1-2 minutes.

4. Stir in the remaining ingredients.

Serves 4

Black Beans & Rice

- 2 Tbs. olive oil
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1 red pepper, chopped
- 2 cups cooked brown rice
- 1 15 oz. can no-salt-added black beans, drained
- 2 Tbs. Worcestershire sauce
- ¼ cup cilantro sprigs, chopped
- ¼ tsp. kosher salt

Per serving (1 cup): calories 280
total fat 8 g | sat fat 1 g | carbs 45 g
fiber 8 g | protein 9 g | sodium 220 mg