Wellness Wednesday

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Eating Beans Can Add Years To Your Life — Especially These 5 Kinds

Beans are often overlooked in our diets, yet they hold remarkable potential for enhancing our health and longevity. Recent studies have illuminated the profound benefits of incorporating beans into our meals, revealing that these humble legumes can significantly reduce the risk of various diseases and even extend our lifespan. We will explore the science behind beans and highlight five specific types that are particularly beneficial for longevity.

The Science Behind Beans and Longevity

Research has consistently shown that beans are a powerhouse of nutrition. A comprehensive meta-analysis published in Advances in Nutrition in 2023 analyzed data from over one million individuals and found a clear correlation between bean consumption and reduced mortality risk. Those who consumed more than 50 grams of beans daily—equivalent to less than half a cup—experienced a 6% lower risk of death compared to those who did not include beans in their diet.

Beans are rich in fiber, plant-based protein, and essential nutrients, making them an excellent choice for promoting overall health. Regular consumption of beans has been linked to a lower risk of cardiovascular diseases, strokes, and various cancers. The high fiber content in beans not only aids digestion but also helps regulate blood sugar levels, which is crucial for preventing chronic diseases.

Nutritional Benefits of Beans

- High in Fiber: Beans are an excellent source of dietary fiber, which supports digestive health and helps maintain a healthy weight.
- Rich in Protein: They provide a plant-based protein source, making them ideal for vegetarians and vegans.
- Packed with Nutrients: Beans are loaded with vitamins and minerals, including folate, magnesium, and potassium, which are essential for various bodily functions.
- Low in Fat: Most beans are low in fat, making them a heart-healthy food choice.

The Top 5 Beans for Longevity

While all beans offer health benefits, certain varieties stand out for their unique properties that contribute to longevity. Here are five types of beans that you should consider adding to your diet:

1. Soybeans

Soybeans are a nutritional powerhouse, particularly for those following a plant-based diet. They are the highest in protein among all beans, providing essential amino acids that support muscle maintenance and overall health. The unsaturated fats found in soybeans help stabilize blood sugar levels, reducing the risk of type 2 diabetes and heart disease.

2. Edamame
Often mistaken for soybeans, edamame are immature soybeans harvested before they fully ripen. They are rich in plant protein, fiber, and essential vitamins like folate and vitamin K, which are vital for bone and cardiovascular health. Edamame is a versatile snack that can be enjoyed on its own or added to salads and stir-fries.

3. Kidney Beans
Kidney beans are renowned for their high fiber content, which is directly linked to improved heart health and longevity. Studies have shown that a high-fiber diet can significantly reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease. In addition to fiber, kidney beans are rich in folate and magnesium, both of which help maintain healthy blood pressure levels.

4. Red Beans
Red beans are packed with antioxidants, which play a crucial role in reducing inflammation and protecting against chronic diseases. Antioxidants are known to combat oxidative stress, a factor that contributes to aging and various health issues. Including red beans in your diet can help promote longevity by reducing inflammation in the body.

5. Chickpeas
Also known as garbanzo beans, chickpeas are a versatile legume that can be used in a variety of dishes. They are rich in fiber, protein, and B vitamins, which are essential for DNA synthesis and repair. Chickpeas also promote gut health and can lower the risk of gut-related diseases.

How to Incorporate More Beans into Your Diet
Adding beans to your meals can be simple and delicious. Here are some easy ways to incorporate more beans into your diet:

- Salads: Toss beans into salads for added protein and fiber.
- Soups and Stews: Add beans to soups and stews for a hearty and nutritious meal.
- Snacks: Enjoy roasted chickpeas or edamame as a healthy snack.
- Dips: Make bean dips, such as hummus, for a tasty appetizer.
- Stir-fries: Include beans in stir-fries for a protein boost.

Tips for Cooking and Preparing Beans
If you're new to cooking with beans, here are some helpful tips:

- Soaking: Soak dried beans overnight to reduce cooking time and improve digestibility.
- Rinsing: Rinse canned beans to remove excess sodium and improve flavor.
- Cooking: Cook beans until they are tender, which enhances their taste and texture.
- Experiment: Try different types of beans in various recipes to discover your favorites.

Incorporating beans into your diet is a simple yet effective way to enhance your health and potentially extend your lifespan. With their rich nutritional profile and numerous health benefits, beans are a valuable addition to any meal plan. By including a variety of beans, such as soybeans, edamame, kidney beans, red beans, and chickpeas, you can enjoy a diverse and nutritious diet that supports longevity. Start small by adding a few servings of beans each week, and watch as your health flourishes.

By embracing the power of beans, we can take significant steps toward a healthier, longer life. So, let’s make beans a staple in our diets and reap the benefits they offer!

Air Fryer Meatball Subs

INGREDIENTS

- 1¼ lb 93% lean ground chicken
- ¼ cup breadcrumbs, plain, seasoned or gluten-free breadcrumbs
- ¼ cup low sodium chicken broth, for moisture
- ¼ cup fresh parsley, finely chopped
- ¼ cup grated Pecorino Romano cheese, or parmesan cheese
- 2 cloves garlic, minced or grated
- 1 large egg
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt
- ¼ teaspoon black pepper
- cooking spray

For Assembly

- 4 small Portuguese rolls, about 2 oz each (or gluten-free buns)
- 1 cup marinara sauce, homemade or jarred (¼ cup per sub)
- 4 slices part-skim mozzarella, provolone or muenster cheese, or 4 ounces shredded

Air fryer meatball subs are a fantastic way to enjoy a beloved classic while keeping things light and healthy. This recipe combines juicy, homemade meatballs with savory marinara sauce and melted cheese, all nestled in a warm roll. Perfect for busy weeknights, these subs are not only quick to prepare but also packed with protein, making them a family favorite. Let's dive into how to create this delightful dish!

Healthier Cooking Method

Using an air fryer allows you to achieve that crispy texture we all love without the excess oil typically used in frying. This method significantly reduces the fat content of your meals, including this hearty recipe. This makes it a healthier option for families looking to maintain a balanced diet.

Quick and Convenient

Since air fryers are known for their speed, it is a game-changer for a hectic week night. This fun, satisfying dinner can be on the table in no time.

Versatile Cooking Options

If you do not have an air fryer, these meatballs can be made ahead of time in the oven and then heated and assembled the night you would like to enjoy.

Nutrition Information

Serving: 1 sub, Calories: 492 kcal, Carbohydrates: 39 g, Protein: 41.5 g, Fat: 18.5 g, Saturated Fat: 6 g, Cholesterol: 169 mg, Sodium: 958 mg, Fiber: 1.5 g, Sugar: 3.5 g



INSTRUCTIONS

How to Make It

1. Make the meatballs: In a large bowl, mix ground chicken, breadcrumbs, chicken broth, parsley, Pecorino Romano, garlic, egg, salt, and pepper until just combined. Roll into 16 meatballs.
2. Air fry the meatballs: Spray the basket with oil or use air fryer parchment (best option to avoid sticking). Place meatballs in a single layer (cook in batches if needed). Air fry 400F 8–10 minutes, flipping halfway, until golden and internal temp reaches 165°F.
3. Heat the sauce: While the meatballs cook, heat up the marinara sauce in a small saucepan or microwave and toss with meatballs.
4. Toast the rolls: Meanwhile split the Portuguese rolls and lightly toast in the air fryer for 1 minute.
5. Assemble the subs: Add 4 meatballs with sauce, top with 1 slice of cheese, and return to the air fryer (place each on foil to avoid spillage) and air fry for 1 minute until cheese melts.

Reference: SkinnyTaste

https://www.nourishmovelove.com/shoulder-mobility-exercises/

Featured Exercise

Shoulder Flossing:

HOW TO DO IT:

Starting Position: Stand tall with your feet shoulder-width apart. Hold the band or strap with both hands, ensuring your grip is wider than shoulder-width. Adjust your grip based on your flexibility; a wider grip is easier for beginners.

Lift and Rotate: Keeping your arms straight, lift the band overhead. As you do this, engage your core and keep your shoulders relaxed, avoiding any tension in your neck.

Bring the Band Behind: Slowly lower the band behind your back, aiming to bring it down towards your buttocks. Ensure that both arms move simultaneously to maintain balance and control.

Return to Start: After reaching the lowest point, reverse the motion by lifting the band back overhead and returning to the starting position. This completes one repetition.

Repetitions: Aim for 4-10 repetitions, depending on your comfort level and experience.

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THE BENEFITS:

Shoulder flossing is an effective exercise designed to enhance shoulder mobility and flexibility. This dynamic movement is particularly beneficial for individuals who engage in activities that require extensive shoulder use, such as weightlifting, yoga, or even daily tasks like reaching overhead.

Regular exercise can help you control your weight, reduce your risk of heart disease, and strengthen your bones and muscles. But if it's been awhile since you've exercised and you have health issues or concerns, it's a good idea to talk to your doctor before starting a new exercise routine.

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