

Pumpkins are one of the most popular fruits in October and have many nutritional benefits. They are rich in the antioxidant beta-carotene, a form a vitamin A. Studies have shown that this can reduce the risk of certain cancers as well as protect against heart disease. The following table shows the nutritional content of 1 cup of cooked pumpkin:

|  |
| --- |
| Nutrition Facts  Pumpkin, boiled,  Serving Size 1 cup |
| Amount Per Serving |
| Calories 49 Calories from Fat 1 |
| Total Fat 0g |
| Saturated Fat 0g |
| Cholesterol 0mg |
| Sodium 2mg |
| Total Carbohydrate 12g |
| Dietary Fiber 3g |
| Sugars 2g |
| Protein 2g |
| Vitamin A 245% Vitamin C 19% |
| Calcium 4% Iron 8% |

Besides carving into Jack-o-lanterns, pumpkins can be used in many different ways. The seeds can be taken out of the pumpkin, rinsed, placed on a cookie sheet, and lightly roasted for 15-20 minutes at 160-170°F. The seeds can be eaten as a nice snack, added to granola, or sprinkled over a salad as a great addition.

Also, pumpkin can be made into a soup, used in breads, muffins, and cakes, and used in puddings and pies.

The following is a Healthy Directions recipe for gluten-free pumpkin bread:

**GF PUMPKIN BREAD©**

The texture of this bread is soft and very moist, and the flavor is reminiscent of pumpkin pie. This bread is rich in vitamin A, potassium, magnesium, zinc, selenium, manganese, B vitamins and protein.

|  |
| --- |
| **Nutrition Facts**  Serving Size 132g  Servings per container 10 |
| Amount Per Serving |
| Calories 360 Calories from Fat 113 |
| **Total Fat** 13g |
| Saturated Fat 1g |
| **Cholesterol** 37mg |
| **Sodium** 373mg |
| **Total Carbohydrate** 61g |
| Dietary Fiber 3g |
| Sugars 31g |
| **Protein** 4g |
| Vitamin A 132% Vitamin C 3% |
| Calcium 10% Iron 10% |

1¾ cup brown rice flour

½ cup tapioca flour

1 teaspoon salt

2½ teaspoon baking powder

½ teaspoon Xanthan gum

1 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon

¼ teaspoon ground cloves

½ cup brown sugar or Sucanet

½ cup honey

½ cup safflower oil or butter

2 eggs

1 can (15 oz.) pumpkin puree

½ cup plumped dried cranberries

Preheat oven to 350°F (convection).  Grease and dust a loaf pan measuring

9 ½”x 5 ¼” x 2 ½”, (with rice flour).

Add cranberries to ¾ cup of boiled water for 10 minutes to plump, and then drain. Combine flours, salt, baking powder, Xanthan gum, baking soda, and spices in a large bowl and mix with a wire whip.  Set aside. In a medium bowl, beat sugar & honey, with oil or butter, and then add eggs.  Beat until light and fluffy.  Add the pumpkin puree, and mix just until incorporated. Add dry ingredients to this mixture, mixing lightly just until smooth.  Fold in cranberries. Turn into prepared pan – mixture will fill pan to top. Bake for 45-55 minutes or until knife inserted comes out clean.

Makes: 1 loaf (approx. 10 1-inch slices)

References

1. Pumpkin, cooked, boiled, drained, without salt. Available at: http://nutritiondata. self.com/facts/vegetables-and-vegetable-products/2601/2. Accessed September 30, 2011.
2. Pumpkins and more. University of Illinois Extension Web site. Available at: http://urbanext.illinois.edu/pumpkins/default.cfm. Accessed September 30, 2011.
3. Pumpkin Seeds. Worlds Healthiest Foods Web site. Available at: http://www.whfoods.com/genpage.php?tname=foodspice&dbid=82. Accessed September 30, 2011.