



Far beyond Halloween!

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pumpkins lose great attention after Halloween? Pumpkin is not usually considered as a fancy vegetable or superfood like avocado, olive or kale. Yet, it is so nutritious and much more affordable. There are a lot of great things about pumpkin.

1) Rich in various vitamins.*¹

Pumpkins are rich in carotenoids – precursor to vitamin A. ½ cup pumpkin provide more than 100% of daily value, which means only ½ cup of pumpkin can achieve recommended daily vitamin A. It also has vitamin Bs, C and E.

2) Sweet without sugar*¹

Cooked pumpkin is very sweet but 1 serving of pumpkin (1/2 cup offers only 1 g sugar. =1/4 teaspoon)

3) Its seeds are also great.*^{2*3}

Pumpkin seeds are not only rich in zinc and iron but also rich in phytochemicals which is beneficial for us human beings. A research highlighted a potential role of pumpkin seed's lignans in breast cancer prevention and/or treatment. Another research found that pumpkin seed's extract showed inhibition of prostate, breast and colon cancer cells.

4) Versatile for cooking.

It can be cooked into sweets and savoury. They can be pumpkin pie, pudding and cakes, there are also pumpkin soup, curry and salads.

5) Easy to store.

A whole pumpkin can be stored in a cool dry place up to 90 days. Even though pumpkins are usually harvested from late summer to mid-autumn, there is a custom to eat it on the winter solstice in Japan. It's said that it is for the prevention of cold and to gain nutrition while other vegetables are scares in winter.*⁴ Our ancestors must be wise enough to choose nutritious foods.

Pumpkin-Carrot dip(Makes 1 cup)

Equipment: Mini chopper or food processor

Ingredients:

- 1 small carrot – peeled & steamed
- 1/2 cup pumpkin (kent, butternut etc.) - steamed -with/without skin
- 1 tablespoon walnuts
- 1 teaspoon sunflower seeds
- 1 teaspoon tahini
- 1 teaspoon apple cider vinegar
- 1 table spoon olive oil
- Pinch of salt & cumin
- 1-2 tablespoons water
- sDry parsley or carrot leaves for topping (optional)



Directions:

- 1) Crush walnuts and sunflower seeds finely in a mini chopper/ food processor.
- 2) Add the rest of ingredients except for water and process until it get smooth.
- 3) Add water 1 tablespoon at a time & process until it gets ideal consistency.

Note: If you want it to be more creamy/smooth, add some more water.

7 easy ways to eat more vegetables

1. **Make vegetables into dips.**
- eggplant, carrots, parsnip and pumpkins are good ingredients.
2. **Cut them small and put it in a sauce.**
3. **Cook many vegetables into curry.**
4. **Put into a soup**
5. **Mash cauliflower, pumpkin, carrots and sweetpotatoes into potato mash.**
6. **Use vegetables as half amount of rissoles or burger pate.**
7. **Put into smoothie.**
- Pak choi, cabbage or capsicum.
Anything with banana & coconut cream will taste great.

*1 WebMD Food calculator <https://www.webmd.com/diet/healthtool-food-calorie-counter> *2 Richter, D. et al (2013) Effects of Phytoestrogen Extracts Isolated from Pumpkin Seeds on Estradiol Production and ER/PR Expression in Breast Cancer and Trophoblast Tumor Cells. *Nutrition & Cancer*, Jul2013, Vol. 65 Issue 5, p739-745, 7p *3 Medjakovic, S. et al (2016) Pumpkin seed extract: Cell growth inhibition of hyperplastic and cancer cells, independent of steroid hormone receptors. *Fitterapia*. Apr;110:150-6.*4 Why do people eat pumpkin on the winter solstice? <http://www.rcc.ricoh-japan.co.jp/rcc/breaktime/untiku/071120.html>