

# pulses are a “superfood”

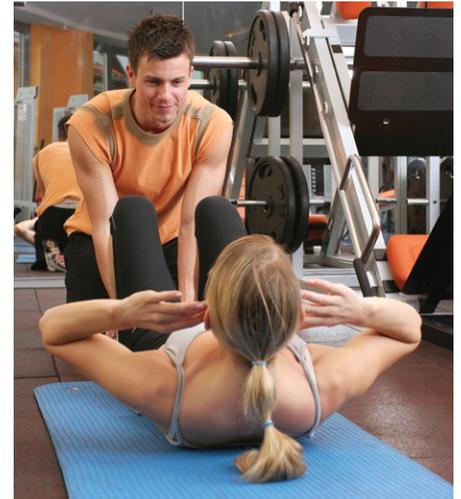


## beans, peas, lentils & chickpeas are a healthy food choice

“Pulses” or “legumes”, include crops like dry peas, dry beans, lentils and chickpeas. They are an excellent food choice with health-promoting benefits. Their key nutrients include complex carbohydrates (e.g. fiber, resistant or slowly digested starch), vegetable protein, folate and other vitamins, and minerals like potassium and iron. All support a healthy diet.

- High Fiber -15 g dietary fiber per cup!
- High Resistant and Slowly Digested Starch
- Vegetable Protein -23% protein
- Low Fat -1%
- Low Glycemic Index (GI)
- High Vitamins and Minerals

pulses are recommended by **health professionals!**



Many health organizations recommend eating pulses to maintain good health and prevent chronic diseases like diabetes, heart disease and cancer. The U.S. Dietary Guidelines (2005) recommend eating 3 cups of dry beans (pulses) per week. In 2005, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration issued this statement: “Diets including beans may reduce your risk of heart disease and certain cancers”. Canada’s 2007 Food Guide to Healthy Living states “Have meat alternatives such as beans, lentils and tofu often” and suggests that regularly choosing beans and other meat alternatives such as lentils can help minimize the amount of saturated fat in the diet.

## pulses can help protect your good health

Clinical research over 40 years has shown that regular intake of beans or other pulses can contribute to a marked reduction in serum cholesterol and other blood lipids – major risk factors for cardiovascular disease. More recently, research studies have shown that regular pulse consumption may assist with weight management by increasing feelings of fullness and controlling appetite.



# pulses are nutrient packed



Pulses contain virtually no fat and provide almost twice the amount of protein found in cereal grains. Also, one cup of pulses contains almost half the daily recommended amount of fiber. Fiber plays a key role in digestive health and contributes to overall well-being. High-fiber foods like pulses help us stay regular, maintain a healthy weight, and ensure a healthy heart. The high fiber and low-fat content of pulses also makes them a good choice for reducing risk of certain cancers. Some non-digested carbohydrates like fiber and resistant starch are known as “prebiotics” that stimulate the growth of good bacteria in the colon. The high protein and complex carbohydrates in pulses can also provide long-lasting energy which is good for sports and endurance activities.



# pulses for special diets



Pulses do not contain gluten which means they are suitable for people who are gluten intolerant or have celiac disease. Celiac disease is a digestive disease that damages the small intestine and interferes with absorption of nutrients from food. People who have celiac disease cannot tolerate a protein called gluten, found in wheat, rye, and barley. Pulses are also an important part of vegetarian diets because they are a high in protein as well as key vitamins and minerals. Pulses are rich in the amino acid lysine, and when combined with a source of the amino acid methionine, such as cereals, provide consumers with a balanced protein needed for growth.

## pulses for controlling blood sugar

Many health professionals are promoting low glycemic index (GI) foods for populations with high rates of diabetes, obesity and heart disease. GI is a scale that ranks foods by how much they raise blood sugar levels compared to white bread or glucose sugar. Foods with a low GI value, like pulses, do not cause a sharp rise in blood sugar levels. This is particularly important for people with diabetes but is also linked with a lower risk of diabetes and cardiovascular disease in otherwise healthy people.

GLYCEMIC INDEX (GI) OF SELECTED FOODS

FOOD ITEM*	GI
 CHICKPEAS	39
 LENTILS	42
 NAVY BEANS	43
 SPLIT PEAS	45
 PINTO BEANS	55
 WHITE RICE	80
 WHITE BREAD**	100
 POTATOES	121

\*150 g cooked except for white bread  
 \*\*White bread was used as the reference food in an amount equal to the carbohydrate available in the test food

# pulses are good for the environment

**Pulses provide health benefits** to you AND are good for the environment. Pulse crops, like peas and lentils, can produce their own nitrogen fertilizer. By lowering the amount of fertilizer needed to grow a crop, pulse production uses less energy and therefore produces less greenhouse gas. Pulses are efficient at producing protein and use less water and less energy.