

**A DIETITIAN'S GUIDE  
TO U.S.-GROWN**

# **CHICKPEAS**

**FROM FARMERS ON A MISSION TO  
HELP PEOPLE EAT MORE PULSES**



# ALL ABOUT **CHICKPEAS:— A PULSE SUPERFOOD**

Welcome to our chickpeas resource guide, complete with nutrition facts and studies, cooking tips, recipes and more that you can use or share with your clients, constituents, and followers.

Affordable, delicious, and easy-to-prepare, U.S.-grown chickpeas – which come in either Kabuli (large) or Desi (small) varieties – are an excellent source of nutrients for all dietary preferences. In fact, the Dietary Guidelines for Americans categorize chickpeas (in addition to lentils, dry beans and peas) as both a vegetable and a protein, making them a nutrient-dense superfood.

In addition to being a go-to option for plant-based protein, chickpeas are packed with fiber, potassium and more, and are free from the top 9 allergens.

*THESE TASTY INGREDIENTS ARE PLANT-BASED SUPERSTARS!*

## FAST FACTS

In the U.S., we grow large cream-colored chickpeas (Kabuli) and small chickpeas (Desi), but chickpeas can also be black, green, red and brown.

Chickpeas are a cost-effective protein source, with 7g of protein per serving.

You can use chickpea water as a substitute for egg whites in baking – just whip up the residual liquid in a chickpea can to create aquafaba!

Chickpeas are one of the oldest foods – there is evidence that they were first cultivated in the Middle East in 7500 B.C.

Ground chickpeas have been used as a coffee substitute since the 18th century and are still commonly used as a caffeine-free alternative.



“ I love chickpeas because of their fiber and protein content along with their versatility! Not only are they nutritious and affordable, there are lots of delicious ways to eat them ”

—AMY GOODSON, RD

# CHICKPEA NUTRITION



“ I love that chickpeas are nutrient powerhouses, have research-backed nutrition and health benefits, and are an eco-friendly, naturally gluten free source of plant protein. They're also incredibly versatile. I love to use chickpeas in both savory and sweet recipes and a wide variety of cuisines. ”

—CYNTHIA SASS, MPH, MA, RD, CSSD

The 2020–2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommends consuming 1.5 cups of cooked pulses per week for all 2,000 calorie diets. As one of the most versatile pulse types, chickpeas are a fantastic option for clients in need of increasing their pulse intake. They're a good source of protein, an excellent source of fiber, and are high in many other essential nutrients.

## Nutritional breakdown of 1/2 CUP COOKED

## CHICKPEAS

<b>Calories</b> 130	<b>Total Fat</b> 2g	<b>Sodium</b> 5.8mg	<b>Carbs</b> 23g	<b>Fiber</b> 6g
<b>Protein</b> 7g	<b>Iron</b> 2mg	<b>Potassium</b> 239mg	<b>Magnesium</b> 39mg	<b>Folate</b> 141mcg

## MYTH-BUSTING PULSES & ANTINUTRIENTS

Antinutrients are common, naturally occurring compounds that are often found in plant-based foods and pulses, like chickpeas! They are thought to give certain plant foods their disease-fighting powers.

Antinutrients – including phytates, lectins and lignans – often get a bad rep. However, in many ways, these antinutrients actually come with benefits. These compounds have been found to boast anti-inflammatory effects, help reduce a foods' glycemic load, potentially lower blood pressure, and support hormones and the immune system, among other benefits.

Any negative impacts of antinutrients are significantly reduced or inactivated when pulse ingredients are cooked, which is how almost all chickpeas and other pulse ingredients are enjoyed or consumed.

Sources: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/19774556>  
<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S096399699390069U>  
<https://lpi.oregonstate.edu/mic/dietary-factors/phytochemicals/lignans>  
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/9759559>

## What Science Says About Chickpeas

### CHICKPEAS + NUTRITION VALUE

- Consumers of chickpeas and/or hummus have been shown to have higher intakes of dietary fiber, folate, magnesium, potassium, and other essential nutrients.\*

- Chickpeas rich in soluble and insoluble fibers, as well as the amine acid lysine.

### CHICKPEAS + WEIGHT MANAGEMENT

- Those who regularly consume chickpeas were 53% less likely to have a body mass index (BMI) over 30.\*

- The consumption of chickpeas is beneficial to glycemic control and may help in weight management.\*\*\*

- In a recent study, women who ate a meal with chickpeas vs. the control group experienced a significant reduction in appetite and calorie intake.\*\*\*

### CHICKPEAS + OVERALL HEALTH

- Chickpeas may also support digestive health by improving the frequency, ease, and consistency of bowel movements due to their high fiber content.\*

- Consumption of chickpeas is associated with reduced rates of certain diseases including heart disease, type 2 diabetes, digestive diseases, and some cancers.\*\*

- Chickpeas may support blood sugar regulation. In a 12-week study among 45 people, those who ate four 10.5-ounce (300-gram) cans of chickpeas per week had a notable reduction in fasting insulin levels, an important factor in blood sugar regulation.\*\*\*\*

\*<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5188421/>

\*\*<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/22916806/>

\*\*\*<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/28303049/>

\*\*\*\*<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/18502235/>

# COOKING

## WITH CHICKPEAS + CHICKPEA PRODUCTS

Purchasing dry chickpeas from the bulk section at the local grocery store is an economical way to enjoy these plant-based superfoods. See our detailed guide on how to cook chickpeas below.

**TIP**  
1 cup dry =  
2 ½ cups cooked



### STOVETOP

#### 1 Soak your chickpeas

**Overnight:** Use 3 cups of cold water for each cup of chickpeas, let stand for 8-24 hours and drain.

**Quick Soak:** Use 3 cups of cold water for each cup of chickpeas, boil 2 minutes, remove from heat, cover and let stand for one hour, drain.

#### 2 Combine chickpeas + water, bring to a boil

For every cup of chickpeas, use 3 cups of water.

#### 3 Simmer for 1.5-2 hours

### PRESSURE COOKER / INSTANT POT

#### 1 Pre-soak beans and chickpeas before cooking

Using same method as above.

**2 Add 1 cup of chickpeas + 1 cup of water to the pressure cooker** Cook on high for 7-12 minutes, let the pressure release naturally.

Note: Times may vary slightly depending on the age and size of the pulse.

Of course, **CANNED CHICKPEAS** (often labeled as garbanzo beans) or frozen cooked chickpeas, are also an economical and time-saving way to enjoy chickpeas at home.

**NUTRITION TIP:** After canned chickpeas are opened, pour them into a strainer and rinse them off to reduce the overall sodium quantity. You can also purchase "Reduced Sodium" varieties. And for those not wanting to dump the canned liquid, use it to make aquafaba, a replacement for egg whites in vegan baking and more!



## CHICKPEA

### PRODUCTS

Beyond canned and dry chickpeas, there are numerous products (and counting) in the store that feature chickpeas, helping to get that 1.5 cups serving per week even simpler.



**Brands:** Banza, Ancient Harvest, Barilla, Hive

**Find them in:** Pasta aisle, natural foods aisle



**Brands:** Biena, The Good Bean, Saffron Road

**Find them in:** Chip or snack aisle, natural foods aisle



**Brands:** Hippeas, Biena

**Find them in:** Chip or snack aisle, natural foods aisle



**Brands:** Sabra, Cedar's, Athenos

**Find them in:** Deli aisle, refrigerated aisle



**Brands:** Bob's Red Mill, Anthony's

**Find them in:** Baking aisle, natural foods aisle

You can also often find chickpeas in the deli section, featured in to-go soups, the salad bar, scoop-and-enjoy hummus, and more.

For clients interested in adding more chickpeas and other pulse ingredients to their diet, we recommend signing up for the **Half-Cup Habit** at [pulses.org/us/half-cup-habit](https://pulses.org/us/half-cup-habit). They'll receive free recipes, cooking guides and more.

## EASY WAYS TO

### ADD CHICKPEAS TO YOUR DIET

Given the many products available and how versatile chickpeas are, adding these ingredients to plates is now easier than ever, giving meals a boost of plant-based nutrition and protein.

A few tips for clients to ensure chickpeas, and other pulse types, are incorporated into their diet:

- ✓ Build a complete protein with chickpeas and whole grains. These complementary protein sources provide a complete protein, or all nine essential amino acids, when paired together. Chickpeas mixed with quinoa and topped with your favorite spice or sauce is an easy go-to!
- ✓ Toss cooked chickpeas on top of salad, pasta or soup. With a mild creamy texture, these mighty pulses complement the dishes' flavors, and can be a cost-effective and nutritious meat replacement.
- ✓ Roast chickpeas with your favorite seasonings for a healthier crouton alternative, or as a daytime snack. We recommend tossing with olive oil and seasonings, placing on a cookie sheet and roasting at 400 degrees Fahrenheit, for 20-25 minutes, tossing occasionally.
- ✓ Blend chickpeas in smoothies for a high-protein, plant-based addition. Their creamy texture meshes perfectly with classic smoothie ingredients like bananas and Greek yogurt.



### CHICKPEA + ANIMAL PROTEINS

For anyone interested in adding more plants or plant-based protein to their diet, chickpeas can be easily blended with ground meats.

- ✓ Replace one-quarter to one-half portion of ground chicken or turkey with an equal amount of mashed chickpeas in tacos and pasta sauces.
- ✓ Swap one-quarter to one-half portion of ground white fish in fish sandwiches or cakes with an equal amount of mashed chickpeas.
- ✓ Add hummus as a topping to meat sandwiches, removing a portion of the meat.

## Chickpea Flour + Gluten-free Living

For anyone interested in gluten-free, chickpea flour is a great go-to!

Chickpea flour is a finely ground, neutral-tasting flour. Like chickpeas, the flour is full of fiber, potassium, folate, and protein.

Chickpea flour can be used for both sweet and savory gluten-free recipes, as a thickener for soup, binder for veggie burgers, key ingredient in pancake batters, etc. It can also be combined with another gluten-free flour and used in baked good recipes like chocolate chip cookies, quick breads, and more.

Chickpea flour is also used in a gluten-free flatbread called socca. Traditionally, socca is made with chickpea flour, olive oil, and spices and then baked in a hot cast-iron pan.

For gluten-free baking, chickpea flour can replace up to 25 percent of regular wheat or gluten-free flour in order to increase protein and fiber, without compromising taste or texture.



“Chickpeas are full of fiber, plant-based protein, vitamins, and minerals. Chickpeas taste great on their own or pureed into hummus or a dip or even roasted and eaten as a crunchy snack or on top of a salad.”

—ABBIE GELLMAN, RD

# THE MEDITERRANEAN DIET

The Mediterranean Diet is the traditional eating pattern of countries along the Mediterranean Sea – part of the Blue Zones, aka, home of the world’s longest-lived cultures. Rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, pulses, nuts, seeds and olive oil, the Mediterranean Diet is considered one of the world’s healthiest eating patterns, and chickpeas are a big staple of it.

## TIPS TO ENJOY A MEDITERRANEAN DIET WITH CHICKPEAS (AND BEYOND!)

Make half your plate fruits or vegetables. As mentioned earlier, due to their high nutrient-density, chickpeas and other pulse types can count as either a vegetable or protein.

Reduce salt with herbs and spices, and drain and rinse canned chickpeas, which can cut sodium up to 40%. Try roasted chickpeas with a little olive oil and a dash of garlic powder and dried basil for a Med Diet-approved snack.

Enjoy hummus, a staple food in areas around the Mediterranean Sea, as a regular snack paired with carrots, cucumbers, tomatoes, or other veggies.

Pair cooked chickpeas with white fish for added plant-based protein and a boost of nutrients.

Numerous studies have shown that the Mediterranean Diet, which is a heart-healthy pattern of eating:

- ✓ Promotes health and longevity
- ✓ May prevent chronic diseases, like heart disease

## FAVORITE MED DIET CHICKPEA RECIPES



**BAKED LEMON PASTA SALAD**

1/2 Cup Serving of Pulses

- 1 lb pasta, lentil or chickpea
- 1 lemon, sliced
- 2 cups chickpeas
- 1 onion, red; thinly sliced
- 1 cup tomatoes, cherry; halved
- 1/2 cup parsley, chopped
- 1/2 cup tahini
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- salt and pepper

1. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Add pasta and cook according to package instructions.
2. While the pasta boils, pre-heat the oven to 425. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper and spread the lemon slices evenly on the paper. Bake for 15 minutes until edges are starting to brown.
3. Place the cooked pasta in a large bowl with the baked lemons, red onion, cherry tomatoes and parsley.
4. In a measuring cup, combine the tahini, lemon juice, and olive oil. Season to taste then pour over pasta mixture. Toss until all ingredients are coated.



**CHICKPEA MASON JAR SALAD**

1/2 Cup Serving of Pulses

- SALAD**
- 1/2 cup chickpeas
  - 1/2 small cucumber, sliced
  - 1/2 cup tomatoes, diced
  - 1/4 cup olives, kalamata; sliced
  - 1/2 cup feta cheese
  - 1/2 cup spinach

- DRESSING**
- 2 tbsp olive oil
  - 1 tbsp balsamic vinegar
  - salt and pepper, to taste

Add dressing ingredients into a small mixing bowl, stir vigorously with a fork until dressing is smooth. In a mason jar add dressing, chickpeas, tomatoes, cucumber, olives, feta, spinach.



**MEDITERRANEAN NACHOS**

1/4 Cup Serving of Pulses

- 2 16 oz bags pita chips, salted
- 1 cup feta cheese, crumbled
- 1 cup black beans, cooked
- 1/2 cup onion, red; chopped
- 1/2 cup artichoke hearts, diced
- 1/2 cup olives, kalamata; chopped
- 1 cup tomatoes, cherry; chopped
- 1/2 cup hummus
- 1/4 cup parsley, fresh; chopped

Set the oven broiler to high. Spread the pita chips on a sheet pan and top with cheese, beans, onion and artichoke hearts. Broil for 8 minutes or until cheese begins to brown. Top with olives, cherry tomatoes, hummus and parsley before serving.



# HEALTHY CHICKPEA RECIPES

These easy-to-prepare recipes come packed with nutrients, and are a simple way for adding plant-based chickpeas to meals.

## INGREDIENTS

**4 chicken thighs**  
**salt**  
**pepper**  
**2 garlic cloves, chopped**  
**1 15 oz can chickpeas, drained and rinsed**  
**1 head kale, washed, stems removed and chopped**  
**4 tbsp cooking oil**  
**1 tsp cumin**  
**1/2 tsp lemon, cut into wedges**

1. Preheat oven to 400° F and line a baking sheet with foil.
2. Rinse and pat dry 4 chicken thighs. Season with salt, pepper, and garlic. Set aside.
3. Add chickpeas and kale to bowl. Drizzle with 1 tablespoon oil and sprinkle with salt, black pepper, cumin, and cayenne. Mix to coat.
4. Place on baking sheet and roast for approximately 7 minutes or until crispy.
5. While kale and chickpeas roast, add 1 tablespoon oil to a large pan over medium heat.
6. Once hot, place chicken thighs skin side down in pan. Cook 4–5 minutes per side, or until skin is crispy and internal temperature reaches 165°.
7. Serve chicken thighs with roasted kale, chickpeas, and lemon wedges.



## Chicken Thighs with Roasted Chickpeas



## Winter Vegetable Soup

**with Swiss Chard, Lentils and Chickpeas**

## INGREDIENTS

**1 tbsp olive oil**  
**1 onion, diced**  
**3 carrots, diced**  
**3 stalks celery, diced**  
**2 cloves garlic, minced**  
**5 chard, Swiss or rainbow; colorful stems removed and chopped, and leaves roughly chopped, divided**  
**1 cup squash, butternut, cubes**  
**1/2 tsp thyme, dried**  
**1/2 tsp oregano, dried**  
**1/2 tsp sea salt**  
**1/2 tsp pepper, black**  
**1/2 cup lentils, green**  
**1 15 oz can tomatoes, diced, with juice**  
**1 15 oz can chickpeas, drained and rinsed**  
**5 cups vegetable broth, organic**  
**1/2 cup parmesan cheese, shaved; for serving (omit if vegan)**

1. Add olive oil to a large pot over medium heat. Add onion, carrots, celery, and garlic and sauté for 5–8 minutes, or until softened. Add swiss chard stems, butternut squash cubes, dried herbs, salt, and pepper. Stir to coat in oil and spices and cook for 1 minute.
2. Add the remainder of the ingredients (except for swiss chard leaves and parmesan cheese) to pot.
3. Bring mixture to a boil, cover, reduce heat, and cook for 20–25 minutes, or until butternut squash is tender and lentils are cooked.
4. Stir in swiss chard leaves and cook until just wilted, about 1–2 minutes.
5. Divide into bowls and garnish with parmesan cheese, if desired. Enjoy!



## INGREDIENTS

- 1 package pasta, dry; spaghetti or bucatini**
- 2 cups tomatoes, cherry; diced**
- 2 cups chickpeas**
- 2 cloves garlic, minced**
- 2 tbsp butter**
- 1/2 cup basil, roughly chopped**
- salt and pepper**

Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil and cook pasta according to package instructions to al dente.

While the pasta is cooking, melt the butter in a large skillet. Add the garlic and cook for 1 minute.

Add the tomatoes and chickpeas and cook for two more minutes.

Drain the pasta, reserving 1 cup of cooking water, and add to the skillet. Toss to combine.

Add pasta cooking water as need to thicken sauce. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

Divide pasta among 4 bowls and top with chopped basil.

## Roasted Vegetables + Chickpeas



## Chickpea + Tomato Pasta

### INGREDIENTS

- 2 cups Brussels sprouts, halved**
- 1 medium sweet potato, chopped**
- 2 cups potatoes, baby fingerling; cut in half**
- 2 beets, golden; peeled and chopped**
- 1 onion, red; chopped**
- 2 cups chickpeas, canned, rinsed and drained**
- 2 tbsp avocado oil**
- 1/2 tsp salt, sea**
- 1/2 tsp pepper**
- 1/2 tsp thyme, dried**

**1/4 cup parsley, fresh; chopped (to garnish)**

Preheat oven to 425 degrees Fahrenheit and line a large baking tray with parchment paper.

Add all chopped veggies and chickpeas to a large bowl. Drizzle with avocado oil and sprinkle with sea salt, pepper, and thyme. Mix to combine and evenly coat.

Spread the vegetables in a single layer on the lined baking tray.

Bake vegetables for 30-35 minutes, stirring halfway through, or until vegetables are tender and lightly browned.

Remove tray from oven and sprinkle with parsley.

**For additional sources, studies, or recipe ideas,  
reach out to [PulseTeam@ThinkMaxwell.com](mailto:PulseTeam@ThinkMaxwell.com), or peruse  
the Nutrition Professionals page on [USAPulses.org](http://USAPulses.org) at  
[USAPulses.org/Nutrition-Professionals](http://USAPulses.org/Nutrition-Professionals).**



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