Healthy Recipe of the Month
- November 2008

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**Dal: Delicious Lentils with Spices**

Choosing to eat more meals using plant based sources of protein just makes sense. The research points to prevention of chronic diseases by decreasing the amounts of saturated fat and high calorie foods. An added benefit is the low cost of beans, lentils and dried peas. Lentils are a staple food of many eastern countries, and I was fortunate to enter into a lively conversation with someone from India, Sadhana Ravishankar, Assistant Research Professor in the Department of Veterinary Science and Microbiology. She has graciously given us her basic recipe for spicy lentils/beans. I tried it with my family, and they loved it! Thank you, Sadhana, for sharing this treasure with us!

Email me and let me know if you liked it - Nancy Rogers, MS, RD, rogersn@email.arizona.edu

**Dal: Spicy Lentils or Beans** (makes 6 servings)

- 2 cups of dried lentils or beans, cooked according to package directions
- 1 onion chopped into medium to fine pieces
- 1-2 tomatoes chopped into medium to fine pieces (can increase the number if someone prefers the sourness or tangy flavor of tomatoes)
- 1/4 to 1/2 tsp turmeric powder depending
on the flavor desired

- 1 tsp red chile powder or 3-5 chopped green chiles
- 1/2 to 1 tsp chopped ginger
- 1/2 to 1 tsp chopped garlic
- 1 tsp garam masala
- 1 tsp cumin powder
- 1 tsp coriander powder
- 1/4 to 1/2 tsp mustard and cumin seeds, if desired
- 2 tsp oil
- 2 tsp chopped cilantro for garnishing
- Salt to taste

The chile powder, garam masala, cumin and coriander powder quantities can be decreased or increased depending on individual taste and flavor needs.

**Preparation:**

- Cook the soaked beans, peas or lentils in boiling water. Add salt and turmeric powder while cooking. Lentils take only 20-30 minutes. Beans can be canned, or cook the dried ones in a crock pot
- Add oil to the cooking pan and add the mustard and cumin seeds
- Once the mustard seeds pop, add the chopped ginger and garlic and sauté them until golden brown. If you are not using mustard seeds, you can start with ginger and garlic.
- Add the green chiles, sauté for a minute.
- Add onions and sauté until they become a bit transparent.
- Add tomatoes, sauté until they get partially cooked.
- Add the chile, cumin, and coriander powders and sauté for a minute.
- Add the cooked beans, peas or lentils and boil for a few minutes.
- Add the garam masala and boil some more until everything is cooked well.
- Add the cilantro and remove from heat.
- Add more salt, if needed (1 tsp. total).
This preparation can be consumed as a soup, or used as a side dish with bread/roti/chappati/pita bread. It can also be mixed with cooked rice.

**Nutrient Analysis per serving**

- Calories 215
- Protein 13g
- fiber 9g
- carbs 36g
- potassium 508 mg
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- iron 3.6 mg
- sodium 395 mg