



EAT TO BEAT
inflammation

•
top-10 foods you need

•
healthy recipes you'll love

•



Raw Kale Salad with
Root Vegetables, p. 22

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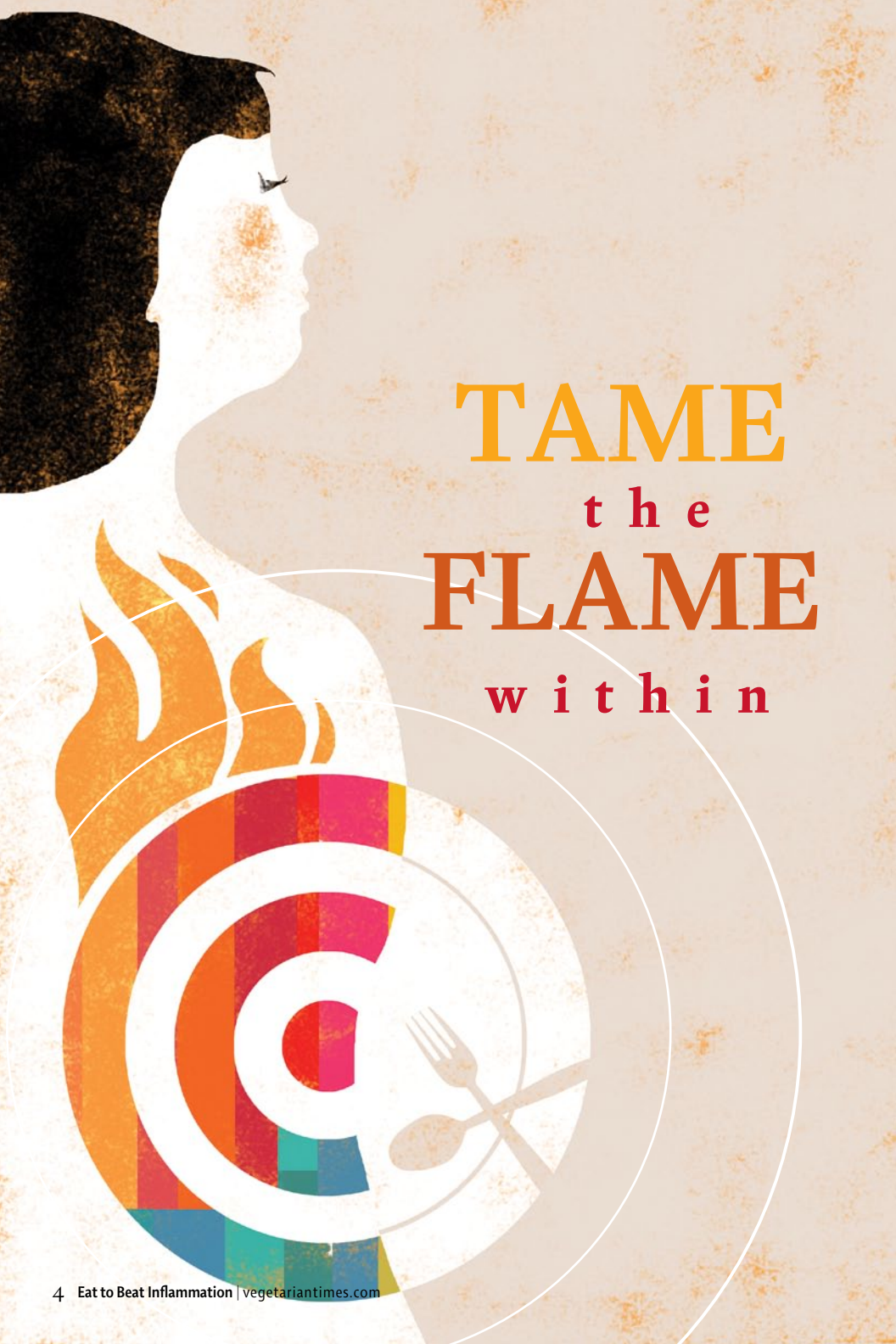


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TAME
t h e
FLAME
w i t h i n

WHAT TO EAT TO BEAT SILENT INFLAMMATION

If you're more klutzy than graceful, you're painfully aware of the inflammation associated with a sprained ankle or a bump on the head. This classic form of inflammation results when the immune system sends in a SWAT team of white blood cells to repair damaged tissue or overpower infection-causing intruders. The resulting redness and swelling are signs that the body is healing itself.

On the flip side, "silent" or chronic inflammation is a subtle form of inflammation that you can neither feel nor see, yet it can undermine your health every day.

BY Matthew Kadey, MS, RD ILLUSTRATIONS Gwenda Kaczor

Basically, the science goes like this: various instigators cause your immune system to fail to shut off—instead it releases a continuous stream of inflammatory compounds that spread throughout the body, damaging cells and tissues.

“What makes low-grade inflammation deadly is that it can operate in stealth mode for years until it reveals itself as heart disease or stroke,” says Christopher Cannon, MD, a cardiologist at Brigham and Women’s Hospital in Boston and coauthor of *The Complete Idiot’s Guide to the Anti-Inflammation Diet*. “Inflammation plays a key role in causing plaque deposits in the arteries to rupture, which can lead to a heart attack or stroke as debris barricades the artery.”

In fact, the more the medical community examines chronic inflammation, the more it’s been associated with maladies such as diabetes, osteoporosis, arthritis, Alzheimer’s, and autoimmune diseases such as lupus. In a report published in the *Journal of Epidemiology* last year, researchers found that of more than 80,000 people studied, those who developed cancer had significantly higher plasma levels of C-reactive protein (CRP), a compound in the blood that signals the presence of inflammation, than their disease-free counterparts. Hay fever, skin

allergies, acne, and asthma have also been linked to chronic inflammation.

Finger on the Triggers

What ignites the kind of inflammation that overstay its welcome? Multiple factors are at work, including aging, weight gain, and stress. “But a major player is a diet that is more proinflammatory than anti-inflammatory,” notes Monica Reinagel, MS, LN, author of *The Inflammation Free Diet Plan*. When you overdo it on proinflammatory foods, your immune system may ramp up production of inflammatory compounds. “Inflammation is one of the tools in the immune system’s toolbox, but while a hammer is a good thing to have when you need to drive a nail, simply walking through the house swinging one around is likely to do more damage than good,” Reinagel says.

While you can’t change factors such as age, you can cool the fire within by making smart decisions regarding what you put in your grocery cart. “Your daily diet is one of the most effective ways to control inflammation,” says Cannon.

Tracy Wilczek, MS, RD, a nutritionist at Pritikin Longevity Center & Spa in Miami, is bullish on a plant-based, whole-foods diet that is low in saturated

WHILE YOU CAN’T CHANGE FACTORS SUCH AS AGE, YOU CAN COOL THE FIRE WITHIN BY MAKING SMART DECISIONS REGARDING WHAT YOU PUT IN YOUR GROCERY CART.

IGNORING A SENSITIVITY TO GLUTEN, LACTOSE, OR OTHER SUBSTANCES MAY EXACERBATE INFLAMMATION.

fats, refined grains, and added sugars. “The anti-inflammatory effect of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, legumes, and other whole foods likely results from a synergy of their nutrients and that they often replace proinflammatory, processed foods in the diet,” she says.

Veg Out

The lauded Mediterranean Diet, rich in plant foods and flavored with olive oil, is a healthful model that fits this description. In fact, a study in a 2010 issue of *The Proceedings of the Nutrition Society* determined that participants who followed a Mediterranean-style eating pattern had lower markers of inflammation, including CRP.

Part of the inflammation-thwarting effect may stem from the high antioxidant content in plant foods, particularly brightly hued vegetables and fruits. “Antioxidants may reduce the inflammation-inducing oxidative damage caused by free radicals that roam the body,” says Reinagel. A Greek study published in 2010 found that a diet high in antioxidants raised blood levels of the anti-inflammatory compound adiponectin.

The low-calorie, nutrient-dense nature of a plant-based whole-foods diet often results in weight loss, which can also help squelch inflammation. “Fat cells churn out inflammation-inducing compounds such as cytokines—a big

factor in why inflammation is such a pervasive problem in an America that is generally too pudgy,” notes Cannon. For this reason, it’s not surprising that the risk for developing almost every chronic disease is elevated when you’re overweight. “Dropping just 5 to 10 percent of your excess weight through a combination of healthy eating and exercise can have a huge impact with respect to lowering inflammation,” Cannon says.

Balance Your Fats

A diet heavy in saturated or trans fats is thought to promote inflammation, and so is an out-of-whack ratio of omega-6 to omega-3 fats. The body uses fatty acids to make prostaglandins, hormones that control inflammation. “Fatty acids from the omega-6 family are converted into inflammatory prostaglandins, while those of the omega-3 family are used to make anti-inflammatory ones,” says Wilczek. “So when you consume too few omega-3 fats in relation to omega-6 fats, you risk encouraging inflammation in the body.”

Early humans probably consumed a nearly balanced ratio of omega-6 to omega-3 fats. People today, however, often ingest 10 to 20 times more omega-6s than omega-3s. Why? First off, a glut of cheap omega-6-rich vegetable oils, predominantly soy and corn oils, have infiltrated packaged processed foods and restaurant kitchens. “Ironically, well-

intentioned advice to replace saturated fats, like butter, with unsaturated fats, such as vegetable oils, often increases the intake of omega-6,” notes Reinagel.

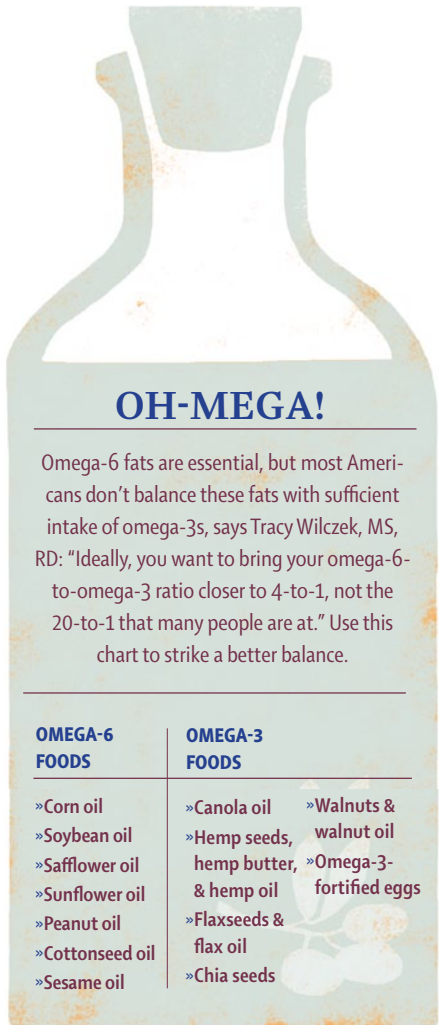
Mind Your Sensitivities

Ignoring an intolerance or sensitivity to gluten, lactose, or other substances may also exacerbate chronic inflammation. “When the body recognizes these items as hostile invaders, the immune system revs up and increases the circulation of inflammatory compounds,” says Reinagel. She adds that foods that are proinflammatory for one person may be benign or even anti-inflammatory for another: “For example, plants in the nightshade family, such as tomatoes and peppers, are considered anti-inflammatory due to their high antioxidant content. But for people with a sensitivity to solanine [an alkaloid in nightshades], they can cause inflammation and joint pain.”

If you suspect you’re sensitive to a particular substance such as gluten or lactose, try eliminating it from your diet for at least two weeks to see if you notice a difference in symptoms, such as reduced bloating, diarrhea, and fatigue.

Be Less Refined

Refined grains, starches, and sweets, which quickly spike blood sugar, can



OH-MEGA!

Omega-6 fats are essential, but most Americans don't balance these fats with sufficient intake of omega-3s, says Tracy Wilczek, MS, RD: “Ideally, you want to bring your omega-6-to-omega-3 ratio closer to 4-to-1, not the 20-to-1 that many people are at.” Use this chart to strike a better balance.

OMEGA-6 FOODS	OMEGA-3 FOODS	
» Corn oil	» Canola oil	» Walnuts & walnut oil
» Soybean oil	» Hemp seeds, hemp butter, & hemp oil	» Omega-3-fortified eggs
» Safflower oil	» Flaxseeds & flax oil	
» Sunflower oil	» Chia seeds	
» Peanut oil		
» Cottonseed oil		
» Sesame oil		

also trigger an inflammatory response. “A vegetarian who shuns fatty meats but still has a menu full of packaged processed foods and baked goods could be setting up an internal environment prime for inflammation,” says Wilczek.

Start by swapping refined grains for higher-fiber whole grains and eating them at meals with healthful fats, such as olive oil, and proteins, such as tofu, to slow digestion. ●



FIRE FEEDERS (eat less of these)

TRANS FATS

A number of packaged baked goods, such as cookies, and a few margarine spreads still harbor inflammation-inducing trans-fatty acids. Scan ingredients lists for hydrogenated or partially hydrogenated oils. Also be aware that “trans-fat free” margarine may still contain much higher levels of omega-6s than omega-3s, depending on the types of oils used.

VEGETABLE OILS

The term *vegetable oil* in the ingredients list of a packaged food often indicates the inclusion of omega-6-rich oils such as corn, soy, or sunflower. Fast-food restaurants are increasingly using these oils to replace those containing saturated or trans fats.

THE DIRTY DOZEN

Fruits and vegetables are definitely part of an anti-inflammatory plan. But certain conventionally grown choices (apples, celery, strawberries, peaches, spinach, imported nectarines and grapes, bell peppers,

potatoes, blueberries, lettuce, and kale/collard greens) are likely to harbor the heaviest pesticide residues, according to the latest report from the Environmental Working Group. Your immune system may register pesticides as invaders—and rev up inflammation accordingly. The solution: choose organic or pesticide-free produce whenever you can, and especially when buying the foods listed above.

SUGARY DRINKS

Highly sweetened sodas, energy drinks, and some bottled iced teas can send your blood sugar soaring. A University of Connecticut study published in 2011 found that a higher intake of sugars and other high-glycemic foods is associated with larger waistlines and markers of inflammation.

REFINED GRAINS

The refined grains in white bread, baked goods, and some boxed cereals can fan the flame by spiking blood sugar levels.

SALTY FOODS

“Too much sodium can raise blood pressure, which raises inflammation,” says Christopher Cannon, MD. Look for low-sodium options when buying soups, canned beans, and veggie burgers.

HIGH-FAT ANIMAL PRODUCTS

Meat and dairy can be high in arachidonic acid, a fat in the omega-6 family that promotes production of inflammatory chemicals. A University of South Carolina study found that among 880 middle-aged adults, those who ate the most red meat tended to have higher markers of inflammation.

POTATO CHIPS

Acrylamide is a potential carcinogen found in potato chips and French fries. Sugars and an amino acid in grains, potatoes, and coffee can form acrylamide when those foods are fried, baked, or roasted. Scientists from Poland reported recently that people who ate acrylamide-rich potato chips daily for a month saw their CRP levels rise.

FIRE FIGHTERS (eat more of these)



EXTRA VIRGIN OLIVE OIL

This Mediterranean diet staple is rich in an anti-inflammatory compound called oleocanthal. Olive oil is also brimming with heart-healthy monounsaturated fat, which, like omega-3s, appears to counteract inflammation.



HEMP SEEDS

Hemp seeds have good amounts of omega-3 fats, and, unlike flax, don't need to be ground before eating for proper absorption of their nutrients. Hemp seeds and hemp oil are also sources of gamma-linolenic acid, which may increase production of anti-inflammatory compounds. Add hemp seeds to yogurt, cereal, salads, and soups.

LENTILS

A recent study by researchers in Spain determined that munching on four servings of legumes per week on a calorie-controlled diet reduces inflammation markers. Lentils are particularly rich in folate, a B vitamin that can help reduce levels of the amino acid homocysteine, which has been linked to inflammation and heart disease. "With less starch than beans, lentils actually have a lower inflammatory rating," says Monica Reinagel, MS, LN.

GRAPEFRUIT

Looking at a cross-section of participants in the Nurses' Health Study, researchers found that women with the highest intakes of flavonoids, particularly those in grapefruit, had significantly lower levels of proinflammatory compounds compared with women with the lowest intakes.



WHOLE GRAINS

Studies suggest swapping out refined grains for whole grains, such as whole wheat, can shave down levels of CRP, a marker for heart-hampering inflammation.



MIKE LORRIG

FIRE FIGHTERS

(eat more of these)



TURMERIC

Curcumin, the antioxidant that gives turmeric its yellow hue, has been shown to be a potent anti-inflammatory.



PISTACHIOS

The verdant nuts are brimming with vitamin B₆. A study published in the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* found that subjects with higher levels of vitamin B₆ had lower amounts of CRP and oxidative damage. More good news: pistachios are jam-packed with inflammation-fighting monounsaturated fatty acids. Just go easy—nuts are high in calories. Make a point of choosing unsalted versions.



CELERY

These crisp stalks are loaded with luteolin, a flavonoid that appears to work particularly well at taming inflammation in the brain.

GINGER

A recent study from the University of Michigan Medical School determined that consuming 2 grams of gingerroot supplement per day can reduce colon inflammation, which may protect against colon cancer.

KALE AND OTHER DARK LEAFIES

Kale, Swiss chard, and collards are storehouses of antioxidants. "High amounts of vitamin K in dark leafy greens, such as kale, also play a role in reducing inflammation," says Reinagel. Because vegetables are generally lower in sugar, she adds, they tend to be more anti-inflammatory than fruit.



Indian-Spiced Lentils with Spinach and Rhubarb



SERVES 6

Rhubarb's fruity flavor complements the Indian spices, sweet raisins, and velvety spinach in this dish. For a more complete dinner, serve this stew over a cooked whole grain, such as quinoa or brown rice.

- 2 Tbs. extra virgin olive oil, divided
- 2 Tbs. yellow mustard seeds
- 2½ tsp. whole cumin seeds
- 3 Tbs. minced fresh ginger
- 3 cloves garlic, minced (1 Tbs.)
- 1 medium red onion, chopped (1½ cups)
- ½ cup golden raisins
- 1 cup brown lentils, rinsed and drained
- 3½ cups low-sodium vegetable broth
- ½ lb. fresh rhubarb, cut into ¼-inch slices, or ½ lb. frozen sliced rhubarb, thawed
- 6 cups baby spinach leaves
- ½ cup chopped cilantro

1. Heat 1 Tbs. oil in nonstick skillet over medium-low heat. Add mustard and cumin seeds. Cover skillet, and cook 2 minutes, or until seeds begin to pop. Cook 1 to 2 minutes more, or until popping stops, shaking skillet often. Remove from heat, stir in ginger and garlic, and season with salt and pepper, if desired. Cover, and set aside.

2. Heat remaining 1 Tbs. oil in saucepan over medium heat. Add onion and raisins; sauté 10 minutes, or until onions begin to brown. Stir in lentils and 3 cups broth; bring to a boil. Reduce heat to medium-low; simmer 25 minutes. Stir in rhubarb and remaining ½ cup broth; cook 6 minutes. Add spinach, cover, and cook mixture 6 minutes more. Stir mixture to incorporate rhubarb and spinach leaves, then stir in spice mixture. Serve garnished with cilantro.

PER 1-CUP SERVING: 250 CAL; 11 G PROT; 6 G TOTAL FAT (<1 G SAT FAT); 41 G CARB; 0 MG CHOL; 130 MG SOD; 11 G FIBER; 13 G SUGARS  

TOP Inflammation Fighters

- ✓ extra virgin olive oil
- ✓ ginger
- ✓ lentils
- ✓ dark leafy greens

Indian-Spiced Lentils with Spinach and Rhubarb



Packed with fiber and lower in starch than other legumes, the humble lentil is an inflammation-fighting superstar.



Savoy Cabbage Salad with Carrot-Ginger Dressing

This zingy salad offers an array of antioxidant-rich veggies, including savoy cabbage, radicchio, onion, avocado, and carrots.

TOP Inflammation Fighters

✓ ginger ✓ hemp seeds

Savoy Cabbage Salad with Carrot-Ginger Dressing

SERVES 4 | 30 MINUTES OR FEWER

Blended raw carrots add texture and color to this salad's zippy dressing. Make extra, and keep it in the fridge for dipping raw vegetables.

DRESSING

- ½ cup grated carrots
- 2 Tbs. finely chopped fresh ginger
- 2 Tbs. rice vinegar
- 1½ Tbs. chunky mixed-grain or white miso paste
- 1 Tbs. roasted sesame oil
- 2 tsp. canola oil
- 1 tsp. maple syrup

SALAD

- 4 cups thinly sliced savoy cabbage (½ cabbage)
- 1 medium radicchio head, thinly sliced (1½ cups)
- 1 avocado, thinly sliced (1 cup)
- ½ cup thinly sliced sweet onion (½ small onion)
- 2 Tbs. hemp seeds

1. To make Dressing: blend all ingredients in blender until smooth.

2. To make Salad: Toss together cabbage, radicchio, avocado, and onion in large bowl. Pour in Dressing, and toss gently until all salad ingredients are coated with Dressing. Sprinkle hemp seeds, on top, and serve.

PER 1¼-CUP SALAD: 197 CAL; 6 G PROT; 14 G TOTAL FAT (2 G SAT FAT); 17 G CARB; 0 MG CHOL; 239 MG SOD; 7 G FIBER; 6 G SUGARS **V**

TIP

For maximum antioxidant punch, buy whole fresh veggies and fruits, and slice and dice them yourself. Whole produce retains its antioxidant capacity better than precut produce.

TOP Inflammation Fighters

✓ quinoa ✓ extra virgin olive oil

Quinoa-Avocado Verrines

SERVES 8 | 30 MINUTES OR FEWER

These light, chilled verrines are a great appetizer to serve before a hearty meal because they won't fill you up. Red quinoa makes the presentation extra eye-catching, but you can also use regular quinoa or steamed bulgur.

- ½ cup red quinoa
- ½ tsp. chili powder, divided
- 3 tsp. lime juice, divided
- 2 tsp. extra virgin olive oil
- 1 ripe avocado (6.5 oz.)
- 2–3 drops Tabasco sauce
- ½ cup alfalfa, broccoli, or leek sprouts



1. Bring quinoa, ¼ tsp. chili powder, and 1 cup water to a boil in small saucepan. Cover, reduce heat to medium-low, and simmer 12 to 15 minutes, or until most liquid is absorbed.

2. Whisk together 2 tsp. lime juice, oil, and remaining ¼ tsp. chili powder in bowl. Add quinoa, and toss to coat. Season with salt and pepper, if desired.

3. Divide quinoa among glasses. (Recipe can be prepared ahead up to this point; cover, and refrigerate up to 24 hours.)

4. Dice avocado, season with salt and pepper (if desired), and toss with Tabasco sauce and remaining 1 tsp. lime juice.

5. Divide avocado among glasses, and top each with pinch of sprouts. Serve immediately, with small forks or spoons.

PER ½-CUP VERRINE: 66 CAL; 1 G PROT; 4 G TOTAL FAT (<1 G SAT FAT); 7 G CARB; 0 MG CHOL; 5 MG SOD; 2 G FIBER; <1 G SUGARS  



MARVELLEN BAKER

Quinoa-Avocado Verrines

Heart-healthy avocados contain oleic acid, a monounsaturated fat that helps lower total cholesterol and LDL (bad) cholesterol levels.

Curried Red Lentil Soup with Lemon

Red lentils are ideal for fast and hearty soups because they soften quickly as they cook.



TOP Inflammation Fighters

✓ lentils ✓ celery ✓ turmeric

Curried Red Lentil Soup with Lemon

SERVES 6

This deliciously easy soup has been a longtime favorite among *VT* staffers. You can't see turmeric on the ingredients list, but it's in there as a major component of curry powder. The soup tastes even better the second day, after the spices have had more time to mingle.

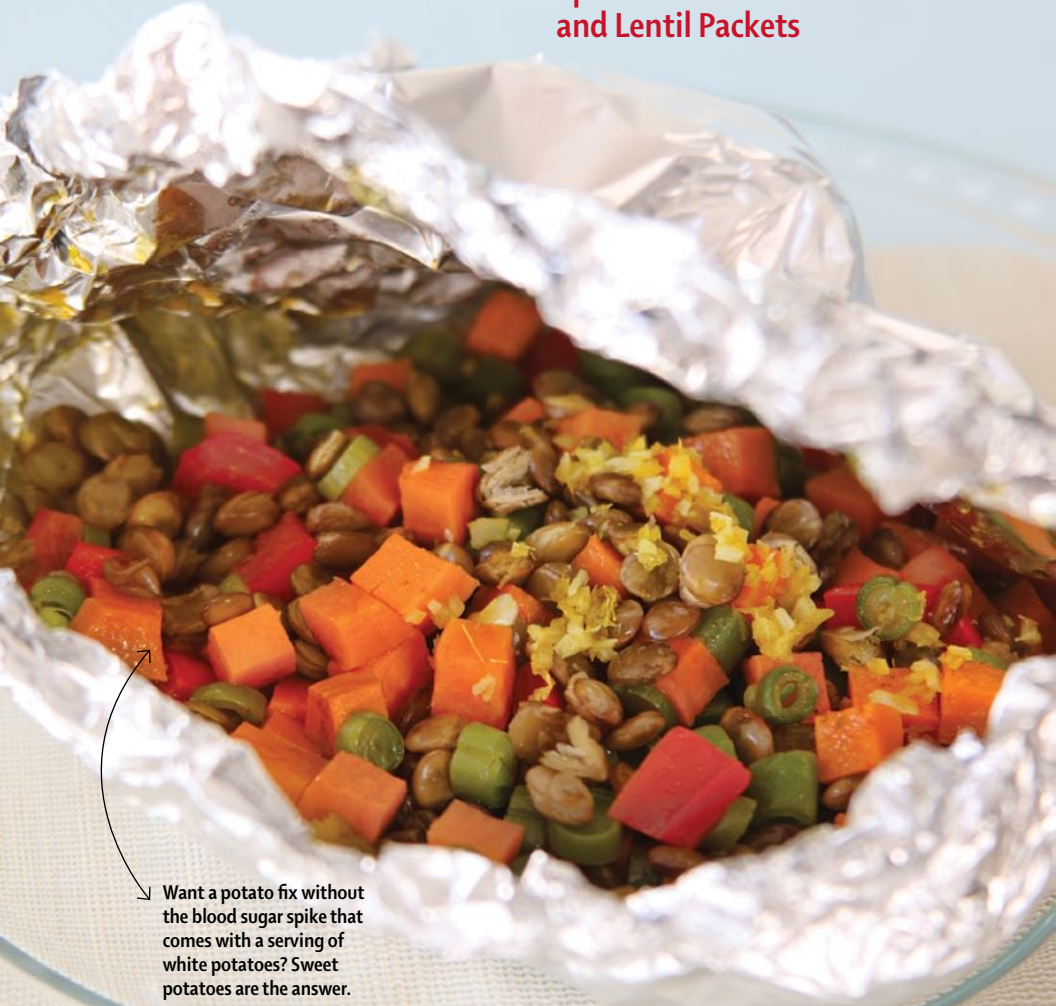
- 2 cups red lentils, sorted and rinsed
- 1 qt. low-sodium vegetable broth
- 1 large onion, finely chopped (2 cups)
- 4 celery stalks, finely chopped (1½ cups)
- 2 large carrots, finely chopped (1½ cups)
- 2 cloves garlic, minced (2 tsp.)
- ¼ cup chopped cilantro
- 1 Tbs. curry powder
- 1 tsp. ground cumin
- 2 Tbs. lemon juice

1. Bring lentils, broth, and 4 cups water to a simmer in large pot. Skim away foam that rises to top. Reduce heat to medium-low, cover, and simmer 5 minutes, stirring occasionally.

2. Add onion, celery, carrots, and garlic; simmer, uncovered, 20 minutes. Add cilantro, curry powder, and cumin, and cook 20 minutes more, or until lentils are soft. Season with salt and pepper, if desired, and stir in lemon juice.

PER 1½-CUP SERVING: 283 CAL; 19 G PROT; 2 G TOTAL FAT (<1 G SAT FAT); 50 G CARB; 0 MG CHOL; 146 MG SOD; 13 G FIBER; 7 G SUGARS  

Spice Market Sweet Potato and Lentil Packets



Want a potato fix without the blood sugar spike that comes with a serving of white potatoes? Sweet potatoes are the answer.

Spice Market Sweet Potato and Lentil Packets

SERVES 4 | 30 MINUTES OR FEWER

Sweet potatoes and lentils get cooked in a curried broth inside foil packets for a lightly spicy dish. Serve over cooked quinoa for a hearty meal.

- 2 cups finely diced sweet potato
- 1 large red bell pepper, diced (1½ cups)
- 1 cup fresh green beans, thinly sliced
- ¼ cup golden raisins
- 2 Tbs. hot sesame oil
- 1 cup low-sodium vegetable broth
- 2 Tbs. minced fresh ginger
- 2 cloves garlic, minced (2 tsp.)
- 1 tsp. curry powder
- 1½ cups cooked lentils or 1 15-oz. can lentils, rinsed and drained
- 4 Tbs. prepared mango chutney, optional

1. Preheat oven to 400°F. Place 4 16-inch lengths of foil on work surface. Fold foil in half from short side. Unfold. Shape corners and edges of one half into semicircular “bowl” with ½-inch sides. Coat insides of foil with cooking spray.

2. Combine sweet potato, bell pepper, green beans, and raisins in medium bowl. Add oil, and toss to coat. Season with salt and pepper, if desired.

3. Whisk together broth, ginger, garlic, and curry powder in small bowl.

4. Divide sweet potato mixture among packets; top with ⅓ cup lentils. Pour ¼ cup broth mixture over lentils, and season with salt and pepper, if desired. Fold other half of foil over ingredients, and crimp edges in overlapping folds until packets are sealed. Transfer packets to baking sheet. Bake 25 minutes.

5. Transfer to plates. Let each person open packet carefully—escaping air will be hot. Top with chutney, if using.

PER PACKET: 265 CAL; 9 G PROT; 7 G TOTAL FAT (1 G SAT FAT); 43 G CARB; 0 MG CHOL; 253 MG SOD; 10 G FIBER; 13 G SUGARS  

TOP Inflammation Fighters

✓ ginger ✓ turmeric ✓ lentils

Raw Kale Salad with Root Vegetables

SERVES 6

Tender, long-leafed Lacinato kale works especially well in this recipe, but any variety will do if it's cut very thin and given a thorough rubdown with salt, vinegar, and olive oil. The grated root vegetables and maple-glazed pecans add just the right crunchiness.

SALAD

- 2 12-oz. bunches kale, stems removed, leaves cut into thin strips or chiffonade
- 2 Tbs. extra virgin olive oil
- 1 Tbs. apple cider vinegar
- 1 tsp. salt, divided
- 1 cup whole pecans
- ¼ cup pure maple syrup
- 2 Tbs. canola oil
- ¼ tsp. cayenne pepper
- 1 medium turnip, peeled and grated (1 cup)
- ½ medium rutabaga, peeled and grated (1 cup)
- 1 medium carrot, grated (½ cup)
- 2 green onions, cut thin on diagonal

DRESSING

- 2 Tbs. lemon juice
- 1 Tbs. grated lemon zest
- 1 Tbs. extra virgin olive oil
- 1 Tbs. low-sodium soy sauce
- 2 tsp. agave nectar

1. To make Salad: Place kale in large bowl, and pour olive oil, vinegar, and ½ tsp. salt over top. Gently massage mixture into kale about 2 to 3 minutes by hand, or until kale starts to wilt. Let rest 30 minutes.
2. Preheat oven to 375°F. Line baking sheet with parchment paper. Toss together pecans, maple syrup, canola oil, remaining ½ tsp. salt, and cayenne in medium bowl. Spread nut mixture in single layer on prepared baking sheet; bake 8 to 10 minutes, or until pecans are brown and fragrant, stirring frequently. Cool in pan.
3. To make Dressing: Whisk together lemon juice, lemon zest, oil, soy sauce, and agave nectar in bowl. Season with salt and pepper, if desired.
4. Stir turnip, rutabaga, carrot, and green onions into kale mixture. Toss with Dressing. Garnish with pecans.

PER 1-CUP SERVING: 321 CAL; 5 G PROT; 24 G TOTAL FAT (2 G SAT FAT);

27 G CARB; 0 MG CHOL; 538 MG SOD; 5 G FIBER; 14 G SUGARS 

TOP Inflammation Fighters

- ✓ dark leafy greens
- ✓ extra virgin olive oil

Raw Kale Salad with Root Vegetables



Whole pecans and extra virgin olive oil add a healthful dose of omega-3s to this crunchy salad.



**Spaghetti Squash with
Orange Gremolata**

Full of fresh, flavorful ingredients, gremolata sauce exemplifies the Mediterranean approach to cooking.

TOP Inflammation Fighters

✓ extra virgin olive oil ✓ pistachios

Spaghetti Squash with Orange Gremolata

SERVES 4 | 30 MINUTES OR FEWER

Gremolata, an Italian condiment made from lemon zest, parsley, and garlic, gets a sweet-and-sour makeover here with orange zest and balsamic vinegar.

- ¼ cup finely chopped red onion
- ¼ cup balsamic vinegar
- 1 large spaghetti squash (3½ lb.)
- ⅓ cup finely chopped parsley leaves
- 2 Tbs. extra virgin olive oil
- 2 cloves garlic, minced (2 tsp.)
- 1 tsp. brown sugar
- ½ tsp. grated orange zest
- ½ tsp. salt
- ⅓ cup roasted, unsalted pistachios, shelled and chopped

1. Toss red onion and balsamic vinegar in small bowl. Let stand 10 minutes.

2. Meanwhile, pierce squash in several places with sharp knife. Microwave 7 minutes on high power. Turn, and microwave 7 to 9 minutes more, or until squash gives slightly when pressed. (Cooking times will vary according to your microwave's wattage.) Cool 10 minutes.

3. Whisk parsley, oil, garlic, brown sugar, orange zest, and salt into balsamic vinegar mixture.

4. Halve squash lengthwise carefully (it will give off steam), and remove seeds. Scrape flesh with fork into large bowl. Combine with parsley mixture and pistachios. Season with salt and pepper, if desired.

PER SERVING: 212 CAL; 4 G PROT 13 G TOTAL FAT (2 G SAT FAT);

24 G CARB; 0 MG CHOL; 488 MG SOD; 5 G FIBER; 11 G SUGARS  

Chickpea Tagine with Cinnamon, Cumin, and Carrots

Nonfat Greek yogurt lends a creamy contrast to this zesty stew—without the pro-inflammatory pitfalls of full-fat yogurt.



TOP Inflammation Fighters

✓ extra virgin olive oil ✓ turmeric

Chickpea Tagine with Cinnamon, Cumin, and Carrots


SERVES 4 | 30 MINUTES OR FEWER

North African cooking often features cinnamon in both savory dishes and desserts. Carrots and raisins make this a slightly sweet stew that's best served with a dollop of "sour" Greek-style yogurt to complement the flavors.

- 2 Tbs. extra virgin olive oil
- 1 small onion, thinly sliced
- 3 cloves garlic, minced (1 Tbs.)
- 2 14.5-oz. cans chickpeas, rinsed and drained
- 3 medium carrots, peeled and sliced into thin rounds
- ¼ cup dried currants
- 1 tsp. ground cinnamon
- 1 tsp. ground cumin
- 1 tsp. ground turmeric
- ¼ tsp. cayenne pepper
- 2 tsp. honey
- ½ cup plain nonfat Greek yogurt
- 3 Tbs. finely chopped fresh parsley

1. Heat oil in large skillet over medium heat. Add onion and garlic, and sauté 2 to 3 minutes, or until onion slices are soft. Stir in chickpeas, carrots, currants, cinnamon, cumin, turmeric, cayenne, honey, and 2 cups water. Cover, and simmer 20 to 25 minutes, stirring occasionally. Season with salt and pepper, if desired.

2. Divide tagine among 4 bowls. Garnish each serving with dollop of yogurt, and sprinkle with parsley.

PER SERVING: 326 CAL; 14 G PROT; 10 G TOTAL FAT (<1 G SAT FAT); 48 G CARB; 0 MG CHOL; 414 MG SOD; 11 G FIBER; 15 G SUGARS 

Citrus Salad

Yes, arugula is dark green and leafy, but, like broccoli and cabbage, it's also a cruciferous vegetable. Crucifers are packed with antioxidant vitamins A and C.



TOP Inflammation Fighters

✓ grapefruit ✓ dark leafy greens ✓ pistachios

Citrus Salad

SERVES 4 | 30 MINUTES OR FEWER

Besides flavonoid-rich grapefruit, this lovely salad gets an additional boost of citrus-sourced flavonoids from fresh oranges and lime or lemon juice.


DRESSING

- 2 Tbs. agave syrup
- 1½ Tbs. lime or lemon juice
- 1 Tbs. low-sodium soy sauce
- ½ tsp. salt
- ¼ tsp. red pepper flakes

SALAD

- 2 oranges or blood oranges
- 1 grapefruit
- ½ cup coarsely chopped arugula
- 1 shallot, peeled, thinly sliced crosswise, and loosened into strands (¼ cup)
- 1 Tbs. coarsely chopped mint leaves
- 2 Tbs. crushed roasted pistachios, peanuts, or dry-roasted almond slivers, for garnish
- 1 Tbs. toasted sesame seeds, for garnish

1. To make Dressing: Mix all ingredients together in bowl. Taste for balance of sweet, sour, salty, and spicy, adjusting seasonings as necessary. Set aside.
2. To make Salad: Slice ends off oranges and grapefruit. Stand fruit on cutting board, and slice away skin and pith from outside with knife. Cut fruit segments from membranes, and transfer to bowl; toss lightly with arugula, shallot, and mint. Toss with Dressing. Serve garnished with pistachios and sesame seeds.

PER ¼-CUP SERVING: 142 CAL; 3 G PROT; 3 G TOTAL FAT (<1 G SAT FAT); 27 G CARB; 0 MG CHOL; 427 MG SOD; 3 G FIBER; 20 G SUGARS 



Root Veggie Chowder with Collard Ribbons

If you can't resist white potatoes, but like to keep blood sugar levels on an even keel, balance the potatoes in a dish with root veggies such as rutabagas.

Root Veggie Chowder with Collard Ribbons

SERVES 6

Loads of root vegetables make this rainbow-colored chowder particularly satisfying. A final flourish from an orange-balsamic mix rounds out the flavor profile.

- 3 Tbs. orange juice
- 1 Tbs. pure maple syrup
- 2 tsp. balsamic vinegar
- 4 oz. collard greens
(½ small bunch)
- 5 Tbs. extra virgin olive oil, divided
- 3 cups (14 oz.)
medium-diced onions
- 1½ Tbs. minced
fresh ginger
- ¾ tsp. salt
- 2 medium Yukon gold
potatoes (12 oz.),
peeled and
diced (1¾ cups)
- 1 lb. carrots, peeled and
cut into medium dice
(2½ cups)
- ½ large rutabaga (12 oz.),
peeled and cut into
medium dice (2½ cups)

TOP Inflammation Fighters

- ✓ dark leafy greens
- ✓ extra virgin olive oil
- ✓ ginger

1. Combine orange juice, maple syrup, and vinegar in glass measuring cup. Set aside.
2. Remove stems from collard leaves by holding a stem with 1 hand and ripping leaf off each stem with other hand. Stack 5 or 6 leaves at a time, roll up lengthwise, and cut into ¼-inch-wide ribbons. Chop ribbons into 2- to 3-inch lengths. Set aside.
3. Heat 2 Tbs. oil in Dutch oven over medium heat. Add onions, and season with salt, if desired. Cover, and cook 6 to 7 minutes. Uncover, and cook 15 minutes more, or until onions are lightly golden. Add ginger, and cook 30 seconds. Add 7 cups water and salt, and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to medium-low, partially cover, and cook 15 minutes. Remove from heat.
4. Heat 1 Tbs. oil in large skillet over medium-high heat. Add potatoes, and season with salt, if desired. Cook 6 to 8 minutes, or until potatoes are well-browned on at least 2 sides, stirring occasionally. Transfer to bowl.
5. Add 1 Tbs. oil to same skillet. Add carrots, and cook 6 to 8 minutes, or until well-browned on at least 2 sides. Transfer to bowl with potatoes.
6. Add remaining 1 Tbs. oil to same skillet. Add rutabaga, and cook 6 to 8 minutes, or until well-browned on at least 2 sides, stirring occasionally. Transfer to bowl with potatoes.
7. Add vegetables to onion broth, and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to medium-low, and simmer 9 minutes, or until vegetables are tender. Add collard greens, and cook 5 minutes. Stir in 1 to 2 Tbs. of orange juice mixture.

PER 1½-CUP SERVING: 231 CAL; 4 G PROT; 12 G TOTAL FAT (2 G SAT FAT);
30 G CARB; 0 MG CHOL; 350 MG SOD; 5 G FIBER; 11G SUGARS  

Gingery Quinoa Salad with Apples, Peas, and Coconut



Did you know that green peas are loaded with fiber, delivering 5 grams per 1-cup serving?

TOP Inflammation Fighters

✓ extra virgin olive oil ✓ ginger ✓ quinoa


Gingery Quinoa Salad with Apples, Peas, and Coconut

SERVES 6

Vegetable juice gives this grain salad a gorgeous color, a hint of flavor, and a hefty boost of vitamin C and beta-carotene.

- ⅓ cup chopped almonds (1½ oz.)
- 2 tsp. extra virgin olive oil
- ½ cup chopped onion
- 2 Tbs. minced fresh ginger
- 1 cup quinoa
- 1½ cups beet-carrot or carrot juice
- 1 cup frozen peas
- 1 medium apple, diced
- ⅓ cup unsweetened shredded coconut

1. Toast almonds in saucepan over medium heat 3 to 5 minutes, or until fragrant and beginning to brown, stirring often. Cool.
2. Wipe out saucepan; add oil and onion. Sauté onion 2 to 3 minutes, or until translucent, stirring occasionally.
3. Stir in ginger, quinoa, and juice, and season with salt and pepper, if desired. Bring to a boil. Cover, reduce heat to medium-low, and simmer 15 to 20 minutes, or until all liquid is absorbed.
4. Remove from heat, and scatter peas over cooked quinoa. Cover, and let stand 10 minutes, until peas are thawed.
5. Stir apple, coconut, and almonds into salad. Serve warm or at room temperature.

PER 1-CUP SERVING: 295 CALORIES; 9 G PROTEIN; 11 G TOTAL FAT (3 G SAT FAT); 40 G CARB; 0 MG CHOL; 98 MG SOD; 6 G FIBER; 7 G SUGARS  

TIP

Conventionally grown apples are treated with pesticides, which may trigger an anti-inflammatory response in the body. Opt for organic apples whenever possible, and be sure to eat the peel, which has the heaviest concentration of good-for-you polyphenols.

TOP Inflammation Fighters

✓ dark leafy greens ✓ extra virgin olive oil


Crispy Kale Leaves

SERVES 6 | 30 MINUTES OR FEWER

Betcha can't eat just one of these light, crispy snacks. Serve them right out of the oven—the leaves lose their crunch after a couple of hours.

- 1 lb. kale, rinsed and patted dry
- 2 Tbs. extra virgin olive oil
- ½ tsp. kosher salt

1. Preheat oven to 325°F. Coat baking sheet with cooking spray.
2. Tear kale into 3-inch pieces, removing tough stems. Transfer leaves to bowl.
3. Toss kale leaves with oil in bowl, until well coated. Spread on baking sheet, and bake 15 minutes. Turn kale with tongs, and bake 10 to 15 minutes more, or until edges are browned and leaves are crispy. Sprinkle with salt.

PER ½-CUP SERVING: 66 CAL; 2 G PROT; 5 G TOTAL FAT (1 G SAT FAT); 5 G CARB; 0 MG CHOL; 184 MG SOD; 1 G FIBER; 0 G SUGARS  

Crispy Kale Leaves

Skip the deep-fried potato chips (they're on the "Fire Feeders" list), and serve up some gently baked kale crisps instead.





Garlic and Kale Soup

Shiitake mushrooms are particularly rich in dietary fibers, including chitin, known to lower cholesterol, and beta-glucan, a long-chain sugar that stimulates T cell production and boosts the immune system.

TOP Inflammation Fighters

✓ whole grains ✓ extra virgin olive oil ✓ dark leafy greens

Garlic and Kale Soup


SERVES 6

This brothy soup provides heart-healthy nutrition on many levels: kale and garlic are good for the cardiovascular system; wheat berries are high in fiber; and shiitake mushrooms contain eritadenine, an amino acid that speeds up processing of cholesterol in the liver. Once the wheat berries have been presoaked, the soup can be ready in under an hour.

- ½ cup wheat berries
- 2 Tbs. extra virgin olive oil
- 3.5 oz. shiitake mushrooms, stemmed and thinly sliced (1 cup)
- 10 cloves garlic, peeled and thinly sliced
- ¼ cup brown rice vinegar
- 4 cups low-sodium vegetable broth
- 1 bunch kale (10 oz.), stemmed and coarsely chopped

- 1.** Soak wheat berries in large bowl of cold water overnight.
- 2.** Heat oil in 2-qt. saucepan over medium heat. Add mushrooms, and season with salt, if desired. Sauté mushrooms 10 minutes, or until beginning to brown. Add garlic, and sauté 2 minutes more. Stir in vinegar; simmer until vinegar is almost evaporated, stirring to scrape up browned bits from pan.
- 3.** Drain wheat berries, and add to mushroom mixture with vegetable broth and 1 cup water. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat to medium-low, and simmer 20 minutes. Add kale, and cook 10 to 20 minutes more, or until kale is tender. Season with salt and pepper, if desired.

PER 1-CUP SERVING: 138 CAL; 4 G PROT; 5 G TOTAL FAT (1 G SAT FAT); 20 G CARB; 0 MG CHOL; 103 MG SOD; 3 G FIBER; 4 G SUGARS **V**



Nutty Sweet Potato Soup with Harissa and Spinach

Capsaicin, which gives chiles their heat, has natural anti-inflammatory properties.

TOP Inflammation Fighters

✓ extra virgin olive oil ✓ turmeric ✓ dark leafy greens

Nutty Sweet Potato Soup with Harissa and Spinach


SERVES 8

Harissa is a smoky North African chile paste made from smoked chiles, olive oil, spices, and sometimes tomatoes. Heat and flavor vary from brand to brand.

- 2 Tbs. extra virgin olive oil
- 2 medium leeks, white and light green parts thinly sliced (2 cups)
- 3 Tbs. tomato paste
- 3 Tbs. creamy peanut butter
- 1½ Tbs. harissa paste
- 2 cloves garlic, minced (2 tsp.)
- 1 tsp. ground turmeric
- ¾ tsp. ground cumin
- 2 medium sweet potatoes, peeled and sliced ¼-inch thick (5 cups)
- 3½ cups low-sodium vegetable broth
- 3 oz. spinach leaves, thinly sliced (2 packed cups)
- Lemon wedges, for garnish

1. Heat oil in Dutch oven over medium-high heat. Add leeks, and sauté 5 to 7 minutes. Stir in tomato paste, peanut butter, harissa, garlic, turmeric, and cumin; cook 1 minute, stirring constantly. Add sweet potatoes, broth, and 1½ cups water, and simmer over medium-low heat, partially covered, 20 to 25 minutes, or until sweet potatoes are tender.

2. Blend mixture with immersion blender, adding more water if soup is too thick. Bring soup back to a simmer, and stir in spinach leaves. Serve with lemon wedges.

PER 1¼-CUP SERVING: 139 CAL; 3 G PROT; 8 G TOTAL FAT (1 G SAT FAT); 16 G CARB; 0 MG CHOL; 188 MG SOD; 3 G FIBER; 5 G SUGARS  

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Vegan and gluten-free recipes are tagged with **V** and **GF** respectively. Look for these symbols with the nutritional information at the end of each recipe.