

Get Pumped With Pumpkin!



PUMPKIN IS A SEASONAL SUPERFOOD that is often overlooked by fitness fanatics. Despite being bombarded by pumpkin flavored everything each autumn, many of the products that tout the orange squash contain very little actual pumpkin. Pumpkin is full of powerful nutrients that boost your immune system, promote healthy skin, improve eyesight, and fight cancer. More importantly, pumpkin is full of potassium, making it a perfect post-workout snack to replenish electrolytes and promote muscle recovery. Pumpkin is an excellent source of dietary fiber, and may help you lose weight by satiating hunger pangs. Roasted pumpkin seeds are a great source of tryptophan, a mood elevator that boosts serotonin levels.

For maximum nutritional impact, make your own pumpkin puree. Begin with a **small pie pumpkin**, available at most grocery stores. Cut the pumpkin in half and scoop out loose pulp and seeds (save the seeds for a healthy snack). Cover the halves with foil and place on a pan on the middle rack of your oven, preheated to 325°. Bake for one hour, or until tender. Allow to cool and then scoop out the flesh. Puree in a food processor or blender, then strain to remove stringy pieces. Use the puree to make **smoothies, quick breads, pies, ice cream and more!** For a nutritious and delicious snack, rinse and dry the **seeds**, toss with butter or olive oil and bake at 250° for about an hour. Sprinkle with **sea salt**.