

## Dried Beans - who has the time?

Wisely, you bought dried beans during a time of questionable food supply and potentially they may be sitting in their original bags pushed to the back of the pantry. Read below to overcome some of the obstacles to adding legumes to your diet and some useful tips for “stepping into” the economic advantage of using dried beans

Just a quick review of the benefits of using pulses in your diet.

Nutritionally, lentils and beans contain significant amounts of fibre, protein, iron, potassium, magnesium and folate; yet minimal amounts of saturated fats, sodium, and sugar. At pennies per serving for dried pulses, you'd be hard-pressed to find another nutrient-packed food that was quite as versatile, delicious, or inexpensive.

Let us now address some of the obstacles:

1. “I prefer the ease of grabbing a can of pre-portioned, canned beans”

The taste and texture of dried beans may take your “bean satisfaction scale” to a whole new level. Tip: Storing your beans in clear airtight containers with handles, will increase convenience and provide a visual reminder of the tasty contents.

2. “Using dried beans requires forethought, timing and a presoaking step to soften sufficiently”

Meal planning is the path to healthy eating. Also, some legumes do not require presoaking; for example lentils cook like rice. Also, dried beans cooked in a pressure cooker can be ready in just over 30 min, with no presoaking!

3. “I have successfully used dried beans, but ended up with more cooked beans than I could possibly keep fresh or repeat, in a week of meal planning!

A ½ cup of dried beans will yield approx. 1.5 cups of ready to eat beans or 3 meal size portions. Beans do not store well in a fridge, so “tunnel out” an area in your freezer to put portioned abundance for convenient future use.

4. “I have a good memory of a previously enjoyed bean dish, but the recipe is not easy to access as is mixed in with all my “potential” recipes”

A well-organised source of everyday recipes (separated from untried recipes) is a main tool in meal planning. Tip: convert an enjoyed paper recipe to an electronic version: snap a picture, create a recipe album in your phone and save it there for easy reference and sharing!

5. “I was not offered beans as a child, and so my experience is limited and the learning curve seems awkward”

Valid point but now may be the time to spend more time in the kitchen embracing, learning and lifestyle changes. Especially since there is an abundance of websites for example [Pulses](#)

6. “My family reject beans, so I would be the only one eating them therefore it seems like a waste of time”

Since beans are inexpensive and can be easy to prepare, go ahead and make a “batch” for yourself. You are worth it! Research shows that children inadvertently will develop a familiarity with beans and may eventually mimic or join in your modeled eating style.

7. “My mouth doesn't salivate with anticipation for the flavor and texture of beans!”

Not yet anyway! Studies show that our palate is largely formed by our experience. Unfamiliar tastes or textures becomes more acceptable with repeated trials. If “Meatless Monday” doesn’t appeal to you try “Less Meat Monday” and start with a sprinkling of beans in an already familiar dish.

8. “I don’t consider beans a comfort food during times of difficult experiences  
Comfort foods might have been useful for the “Covid Sprint” but there is great opportunity now for a lifestyle reset, that is more cognitively satisfying and health sustainable.

9. “I consider myself a “ Meat Lover” and will never intentionally eat beans, not even brown beans”!

Fortunately, we still have a plentiful multi choice food supply and eating lean meat in moderation (1/4 of your plate) with ½ plate of vegies, is a diet that supports health and disease management.

10. “Beans cause my abdomen to bloat and I expel gas”!

Some digestive system may be particularly sensitive to the prebiotic, high fibre properties of beans but other digestive system just need time to adjust. Start with small portions and consider the use of a digestive enzyme like Beano, especially when you start socializing outside your family unit again!

Looking to use your time to reset your eating habits? Contact me for a Free 15 min telephone chat and review of counselling options. Free webinars available on Picky Eating and Plant Proteins in April and May. Follow my new [Facebook Page](#) for regular postings of: nutrition tips, recipes, webinars, links and nutrition hacks from my own personal experience with food.

Cindy Dodsworth is the In- Store Dietitian for Zehrs at 7201 Tecumseh Rd and 400 Manning Road.

[Cindy.Dodsworth@loblaw.ca](mailto:Cindy.Dodsworth@loblaw.ca)

519-551-4493

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