

Barley Nutrition

When it comes to good nutrition, barley is a year-round winner. Barley contains key components that have been linked to providing important nutritional benefits for human health. These include fiber, antioxidants, phytochemicals, protein, vitamins, and minerals. Like other grains, barley is an important source of complex carbohydrates. It is also saturated fat-free, sodium-free, and cholesterol-free.

For example, a 1/2 cup of cooked barley contains less than 1/2 gram of fat and only 100 calories. Barley also supplies more protein than many other grains.

Purchasing Barley

Consumers may purchase barley in several forms. Pearl barley is sold in most supermarkets. Barley flour, flakes and grits may be found in health food and specialty stores. Barley is also used as a commercial ingredient in prepared foods such as breakfast cereals, soups, pilaf mixes, breads, cookies, crackers and snack bars.

Storing Barley

For best quality, store barley in an airtight container in a cool place. For long-term storage, refrigerate or freeze barley.

To keep prep time down, cook pearl barley ahead of time, divide into one-cup portions and refrigerate or freeze until ready to use. Cooked barley can be refrigerated up to a week or frozen up to three months.

Cooking Pearl Barley

Like other grains, pearl barley requires cooking time for water absorption. Regular pearl barley should be cooked for approximately 45 to 60 minutes. "Quick" pearl barley has been rolled and steamed. This product requires only 10 to 12 minutes cooking time.

To save time on busy cooking days, prepare barley in advance and freeze to use later. Use your microwave for quick defrosting. To thaw 1 cup frozen cooked barley, place in the microwave and cook on HIGH 2 to 2 1/2 minutes. Two cups of frozen cooked barley takes about 3 to 3 1/2 minutes on HIGH. Fluff thawed barley with a fork before using.

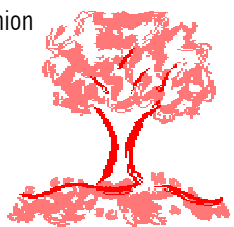
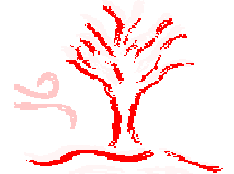
Barley is a "Keeper Carb"

- ⇒ Complex carbohydrates provide the body with the fuel it needs for physical activity and for proper organ function.
- ⇒ The best sources of carbohydrates are whole grains, fruits and vegetables, which deliver essential vitamins and minerals, fiber, and a host of important phytonutrients.
- ⇒ Many complex carbohydrate foods, such as barley, are rich in dietary fiber. **Barley is high in beta-glucan, a soluble fiber, which significantly lowers total cholesterol and reduces the risk of cardiovascular disease.**

All-Season Barley Salad

Serve this salad hot for a satisfying cold weather dish or chilled for breezy summertime dining.

1 cup	pearl barley
3 cups	water
1 tsp	salt
1/4 cup	bottled Italian dressing
1/4 lb	diced bacon, fried until crisp & drained
1 1/2 cups	frozen green peas, thawed
1 cup	thinly sliced celery
1/2 cup	thinly sliced onion or 1/4 cup chopped green onion
1/3 cup	sliced water chestnuts
1 jar (2 oz.)	sliced pimentos, drained
1/4 cup	<u>each</u> mayonnaise and sour cream
	salt & pepper to taste



Place barley, water and salt in large saucepan. Bring to boil. Cover and cook on low heat for 1 hour or until tender. Drain well. Pour Italian dressing over warm barley and toss to coat lightly. Cover and chill. Add remaining ingredients, except garnish.

For chilled salad: Spoon barley mixture into serving bowl; chill 2 to 3 hours.
For a hot salad: Spoon mixture into a baking dish or individual ramekins. Bake at 350 °F 15 to 20 minutes or until heated through. Or heat in microwave over on high 2 to 3 minutes. Garnish salad with tomato slices or wedges and lettuce leaves, if desired. Makes 6 servings.

Variations: In place of bacon, substitute one or a combination of the following: 1 cup cooked shrimp; 1 can (6 1/2 oz.) tuna drained; 2 to 3 diced hard boiled eggs; 1 cup diced cheese or ham; 1 cup cooked and cubed chicken or turkey.

JUST FOR KIDS

Introducing children to barley and other grains at an early age can set them on their way to a lifetime of healthful and pleasurable eating habits. But for many moms and dads, that's easier said than done! Here are a few tips on how to get kids on the healthful grain bandwagon for life:

Easy does it: Introduce barley and other grains gradually into your meal plan. Don't overwhelm your child with too much too soon. One new taste in a meal is plenty for most young diners.

Keep it familiar: Serve barley with other foods that are familiar and enjoyable to your child. For example, add a cup of cooked pearl barley to tomato soup.

Get them involved: One of the best ways to interest children in new foods is to let them help prepare it. For example, when preparing Rock-M-Sock-M Chili, let your child help gather the ingredients and measure out the barley.

Be patient: Accepting new tastes and textures may take time for some children, so patience is a must. Remember, if at first you don't succeed, try, try again!

Rock-m-Sock-m Chili



It's a fast, flavorful and guaranteed kid pleaser! Serve fiber-rich Rock-m-Sock-m chili with cornbread and carrot or celery sticks.

2 tsp.	vegetable oil
1 lb.	ground beef, turkey or chicken
1 cup	coarsely chopped onion
1/2 cup	pearl barley
1 (28 oz) can	cut tomatoes
1 cup	water
1-2 tbsp.	chili powder
1/2 tsp.	salt
2 (15 oz.) cans	pinto or red beans
	grated cheddar cheese or tortilla chips for garnish

Heat oil in dutch oven or heavy 4 to 5-quart pan over medium heat. Add ground beef and onion. Cook, stirring frequently, until beef is no longer pink. Add barley, tomatoes, water, chili powder and salt. Cover and cook 30 minutes over medium low heat. Add undrained beans and continue to cook 15 to 20 minutes to blend flavors and finish cooking barley. Serve in bowls topped with grated cheese or crumbled tortilla chips, if desired. Makes 8 servings.

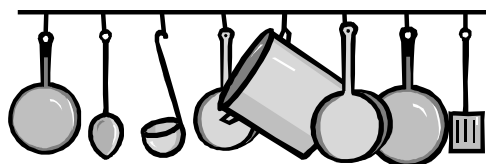
Per serving: 347 calories, 21g protein, 10g fat, 44g carbohydrate, 37mg cholesterol, 6g fiber, 343mg sodium.

Fiber-Up Prepared Foods

It's easy to fiber up prepared foods quickly and easily with heart-healthy pearl barley. Here are a few ideas to get you started. To keep prep time down, cook pearl barley ahead of time, divide into one-cup portions and refrigerate or freeze until ready to use.

- Add a cup of cooked pearl barley to a package of fresh or frozen stir-fry Oriental vegetables. For added crunch, toss in cashews or sliced water chestnuts.
- Stretch your favorite meatloaf or meatball recipe with a cup of cooked pearl barley. Don't forget to give burgers a fiber boost too.
- Make good canned soup even better by adding a cup of cooked pearl barley. Tomato, vegetable, split pea, beef, chicken and minestrone soups are all especially good with the addition of this wholesome grain.
- For a quick whole-meal salad, gently toss a cup of cooked pearl barley with 1-1/2 cups cooked and cubed chicken or turkey, 1 cup halved green grapes and 1/2 cup each sliced celery and water chestnuts. Dress with your favorite salad dressing and garnish with toasted almonds.

SINGULAR SENSATIONS



CHINA BARLEY SKILLET DINNER

This layered whole-meal entrée is a snap to put together and requires no stirring while it cooks on the stove. For accompaniments, serve coleslaw studded with mandarin orange slices and fortune cookies for dessert

1 cup	pearl barley
3 cups	chicken broth
1 lb.	ground beef
1/2 cup	sliced water chestnuts
2 tbsp.	soy sauce
1 tbsp.	sherry wine
1 clove	minced garlic
1/4 tsp.	powdered ginger
1/4 cup	sliced green onion
2 cups	frozen oriental-style vegetables

Combine barley and chicken broth in large covered skillet. Bring to boil; reduce heat to low and cook covered for 20 minutes. In the meantime, combine ground beef with remaining ingredients, except oriental-style vegetables. After barley cooks 20 minutes, top with layer of vegetables. Spread ground beef mixture over vegetable layer. Cover and continue to cook 30 to 35 minutes or until barley and vegetables are tender and liquid is absorbed. Makes 6 servings.

Per Serving: 317 calories, 21g protein, 12g fat, 32g carbohydrate, 49mg cholesterol, 7g fiber, 793mg sodium.