

Preparing the healthiest beans for you

Beans are a delicious, affordable, convenient food! They are a great source of protein and fiber and a good substitute for animal protein. Learn more about beans and how to add them to your diet.

Benefits of beans

Beans are low in fat and have no saturated fat, trans fat, or cholesterol, helping protect your heart from heart disease. They also contain fiber, protein, iron, and other nutrients that can help reduce the risk of heart disease.

Beans are a great low-cost option you can buy at your local grocery store, dollar store, food pantry, and more. Try using them in soups, in salads, added to rice, or in tacos.



Managing salt and potassium

Although beans can be high in potassium and salt, there are ways to manage the amounts when choosing and preparing your beans, including:

- ✓ **Checking labels** – Limit the amount of sodium by choosing “unsalted” or “no salt added” canned beans.
- ✓ **Soaking beans** – Soak regular canned beans before cooking to eliminate excess sodium. When using dried beans, reduce the potassium by soaking them for 12 hours before cooking.
- ✓ **Draining extra liquid** – Lower the potassium in your cooked beans by draining excess liquid.
- ✓ **Adding low-sodium flavor** – Use spices, herbs, or low-sodium chicken broth to enhance flavor. When choosing broth, read the ingredients list carefully to make sure it does not contain added potassium.



We are here to help

Talk to your care team about more tips for adding beans to your diet.

Stewed beans

Try our favorite stewed bean recipe!

Ingredients

- 2 tbsp of canola or olive oil
- ½ medium onion, chopped
- ½ medium red bell pepper, chopped
- ½ medium green pepper, chopped
- 4 garlic cloves, chopped
- Fresh cilantro
- 1 tsp of paprika
- 1 tsp of cumin
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 can (15 oz) of unsalted beans (pinto or kidney), rinsed with water to reduce sodium
- 2 tbsp of tomato paste
- 2 cups of low-sodium chicken or vegetable broth
- 1 medium potato, diced

Directions

1. Heat the canola or olive oil on medium heat in a large saucepan. Add the onions, red pepper, green pepper, garlic, cilantro, paprika, cumin, and bay leaf. Sauté, stirring occasionally until the onions are translucent.
2. Add the beans, tomato paste, low-sodium broth, and potatoes. Bring to a boil.
3. Reduce the heat, cover, and simmer for 15 minutes until the potatoes are tender.
4. Remove from heat, serve with brown rice and a side salad.



Food prep tips

To reduce the amount of sodium in canned beans, rinse them with water before use. To reduce the amount of potassium in potatoes, cut them into small pieces and soak in water for at least 2 hours. Drain the water before cooking.