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The Heart-Healthy Breakfast That Never Gets Old

February is Heart Month. Let's celebrate with all the reasons we love the old-fashioned breakfast that never goes out of style: oatmeal. During this media segment, Hy-Vee Registered Dietitian Melissa Jaeger explains why oatmeal is so good for your heart and a few favorite variations.

Pro tip: Old-fashioned oats cook in about 5 to 10 minutes; quick oats cook in about 1 minute. Both contain fiber and protein.

Health Benefits

1. Lowers Cholesterol

Oatmeal contains soluble fiber which helps remove low-density lipoprotein (bad cholesterol).

2. Gut Friendly

Oatmeal also contains insoluble fiber which helps you feel full while also keeping things moving through your digestive tract.

3. Sustained Energy

Oats are a source of complex carbohydrates, which digest more slowly, for more sustained energy. Complex carbohydrates also help prevent a spike in blood sugar.

4. Source of Protein

One serving of Old Fashioned Quaker Oats contains 5 grams of protein.

Banana Bread Oatmeal

Serves 6

ALL YOU NEED:

- 3 cups nonfat milk
- 3 tbsp firmly packed brown sugar
- 3/4 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1/4 tsp salt (optional)
- 1/4 tsp ground nutmeg
- 2 cups Quaker® Oats (Quick or Old Fashioned, uncooked)
- 1 cup mashed ripe bananas (about 3 medium)
- 2 tbsp coarsely chopped toasted pecans
- Plain or vanilla nonfat yogurt (optional)
- Banana slices (optional)
- Pecan halves (optional)

ALL YOU DO:

In medium saucepan, bring milk, brown sugar, cinnamon, salt and nutmeg to gentle boil (watch carefully); stir in oats. Return to boil; reduce heat to medium. Cook 1 minute for Quick Oats, 5 minutes for Old Fashioned Oats, or until most of liquid is absorbed, stirring occasionally. Remove oatmeal from heat. Stir in mashed bananas and pecans. Spoon oatmeal into six cereal bowls. Top with yogurt, sliced bananas and pecan halves, if desired.

Nutrition facts per serving: 220 calories, 4g fat, 1g saturated fat, 5mg cholesterol, 55mg sodium, 40g carbohydrate, 4g fiber, 18g sugar, 8g protein.



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Oatmeal Variations:

Fig and Ricotta Oatmeal

All you need:

1 cup water

½ cup old-fashioned rolled oats

2 tbsp part-skim ricotta cheese

2 tbsp dried figs, chopped

1 tbsp sliced almonds, toasted

2 tsp honey

Pinch of salt

All you do:

1. Bring water and salt to a boil in a small saucepan. Stir in oats, reduce heat to medium and cook, stirring occasionally, until most of the liquid is absorbed, about 5 minutes. Remove from heat, cover and let stand 2 to 3 minutes. Top with ricotta, figs, almonds and honey.
2. *Overnight oats variation: Combine 1/2 cup old-fashioned rolled oats with 1/2 cup water and a pinch of salt in a jar or bowl. Cover and refrigerate overnight. In the morning, add toppings. Eat cold or heat up. Makes about 1 cup.
3. *Steel-cut oats variation: Bring 1 cup water and a pinch of salt to a boil in a small saucepan. Add 1/3 cup steel-oats, reduce heat to a bare simmer, cover and cook, stirring occasionally, until most of the liquid is absorbed, 15 to 20 minutes. Remove from heat and let stand, covered, 2 to 3 minutes. Add toppings. Makes about 1 cup.

Nutrition Facts: 315 calories, 8g fat, 2g saturated fat, 193 mg sodium, 53g carbohydrate, 7g fiber, 22g total sugar, 10g protein. 16% iron, 14% calcium.

Chocolate Chip Banana Oatmeal Cookies

All you need:

1 cup instant oats

¾ cup whole wheat flour

1 tsp baking powder

½ tsp cinnamon

1/8 tsp salt

2 tbsp unsalted butter, melted

½ cup brown sugar

1 ripe banana, mashed

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

1 large egg

¼ cup chocolate chips



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All you do:

1. Combine oats, flour, baking powder, cinnamon and salt in a medium bowl.
2. Mix butter, sugar, banana and vanilla in a separate bowl. Add egg and mix well. Add dry ingredients to wet ingredients until just incorporated. Mix in chocolate chips. Cover and refrigerate 30 minutes.
3. Preheat oven to 375 degrees F.
4. Drop spoonfuls of cookie dough onto parchment-lined baking sheet and press down to flatten.
5. Bake 10 – 12 minutes or until browned. Let cook 5 minutes on baking sheet before transferring to cooling rack.

Nutrition Information: 81 calories, 2g fat, 2g protein, 14g carbohydrate, 1g fiber, 22mg sodium, 13mg cholesterol, 8g sugar, 10mg calcium.