Apple and Ginger Pumpkin Soup

Overview
Relish autumn’s flavours and colours right in your bowl with this silky pumpkin soup. The Granny Smith apple and ginger serve as a perfect compliment to the mild and sweet taste of the pumpkin. This nutritious soup is quick, easy and sure to be a family favourite!

Source: Adapted from Eat, Shrink and Be Merry Cookbook, 2005

Ingredients
- 2 teaspoons olive oil or butter
- 1 cup chopped onions
- 1 teaspoon minced garlic
- 1 tablespoon grated gingerroot
- 1 teaspoon curry powder
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cumin
- 4 cups reduced-sodium chicken broth
- 2 cups peeled, chopped Granny Smith apples
- 2 cups canned pure pumpkin (not pumpkin pie filling)
- 1 cup chopped carrots
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper (or to taste)
- 3/4 cup evaporated 2% milk, or light (5%) cream

Directions
1. Heat olive oil in a large, non-stick soup pot over medium heat. Add onions and garlic. Cook and stir until onions begin to soften, about 3 minutes. Add gingerroot, curry powder and ground cumin. Mix well and cook for 30 more seconds.
2. Add broth, apples, pumpkin, carrots, salt, and pepper. Bring mixture to a boil. Reduce heat to low and simmer, covered for 12 to 15 minutes, or until carrots are tender. Stir occasionally.
3. Working in two batches, transfer soup to a blender and puree until smooth. Soup will be very thick. Return pureed soup to pot and stir in evaporated milk. Serve hot.

Makes 6 servings

Nutrition Information
Per serving (1/6th of Recipe: ~ 300ml)
- Calories: 142
- Fat: 3 g
- Carbohydrate: 23 g
- Fibre: 4.4 g
- Protein: 7 g
Pumpkin: a Champion for Vitamin A

What is in pumpkin?
(1/2 cup cooked pumpkin with nothing added)

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<th>Nutrition Facts</th>
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<tr>
<td>Serving Size: (125g)</td>
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Why Do You Need it?
Vitamin A is an important vitamin for many functions in the body. The most important function that vitamin A is needed for, is night vision. One of the types of cells in our eye that allows us to see light requires vitamin A to function. Without vitamin A, our ability to see in dark situations would be greatly reduced.

Vitamin A Basics
Vitamin A is required for our survival. It is a fat soluble vitamin, and can be stored in the body, along with vitamins K, E and D. Due to our ability to store it, there is also the potential to have vitamin A toxicity.

There are many possible forms of vitamin A. Our body has the ability to convert it amongst retinal, retinol, and retinoid acid. Each form has different uses within the body.

Not Enough Vitamin A?
As an essential vitamin, problems can occur if we don’t get enough of it. The most noticeable result of vitamin A deficiency is a loss in night vision. This condition can continue and lead to reversible and even irreversible blindness. A lack of vitamin A can also alter the functions of the immune system, have negative effects on the reproductive system, and reduce growth in children.

Did you know? Fun fact!
Do you know why ships and planes use red lights to light up the decks at night time? To see in the dark better! The red light doesn’t activate the cone (colour) cells in the eye, allowing it to see other lights more clearly.

Did you know that in low light, you can’t see in colour? There isn’t enough light to activate the cone (colour) cells in your eyes, just the rods!

How Much Do You Need?
To understand how much vitamin A you need, you also need to understand how it is measured. Due to the fact that it is available in many forms, a standard unit is required to measure amounts. Vitamin A is often referred to in international units (IU), which are a standardized measurement for the vitamin A activity. For example, 1mcg of retinal is 3.33 IU.

According to the Daily Recommended Intake tables from Health Canada, an adult male should consume 3000 IU/day, and an adult female 2333 IU/day. Check your multivitamin package to see how much is in it!
Next time that you are preparing for Halloween by carving a pumpkin, think twice about throwing the seeds away! Pumpkin seeds are one of the most delicious and nutritious seeds around!

Benefits of Pumpkin Seeds

**Magnificent Magnesium!**

Magnesium is the fourth most common mineral found in the body and an essential component for good health. It helps with:
- The breakdown of carbohydrates, fats and proteins
- The development and maintenance of strong bones and teeth
- Maintenance of proper muscle and nerve function throughout the body

To roast your own pumpkin seeds:

1. Remove any excess pulp that may have stuck to the seeds when removing them from the pumpkin cavity
2. Dry the seeds with paper towel and spread them out on more paper towel allowing them to dry overnight
3. Place the seeds in a single layer on a cookie sheet and add approximately 2 teaspoons of olive oil. Toss the seeds with the oil so that they are coated. Sprinkle with a pinch of salt if desired
4. Bake the seeds in a 250°F (120°C) for 1 hour or until golden brown, stirring every 15 minutes

**Too Much Vitamin A!**

As a fat-soluble vitamin, vitamin A has the potential to cause a toxicity. This is possible if there is a continual intake that is much higher than the recommended daily allowance. In an average, balanced diet, toxicity of this, or any micronutrient, is rare.

Vitamin A toxicity can be chronic or acute (happening continuously, or in one instance, depending on dose), and can lead to:
- Nausea, vomiting, and abdominal pain
- Loss of appetite, hair, and energy levels
- Muscle and bone tenderness

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Don’t Forget the Pumpkin Seeds!
Brought to you by the Dietitians at the HPC

References and Further Reading

- Apple and Ginger Pumpkin Soup— Eat, Shrink and Be Merry Cookbook, 2005
- The Eye and How It Sees Light: http://hyperphysics.phy-astr.gsu.edu/hbase/vision/bright.html#c2
- Vitamin A Toxicity: http://emedicine.medscape.com/article/126104-overview

Did you find this newsletter interesting and helpful?

Do you have more questions on how to make healthy changes to your lifestyle?

Come see a Registered Dietitian at the HPC. Learn how much you need to eat, how to optimize your metabolism, prevent cravings, and increase your energy levels!

For information on our programs, check out our website www.uoguelph.ca/hpc and click on the "Nutrition" tab, or call a friendly receptionist at the HPC at 519-767-5011, ext 1.