

# Barley Facts

NUTRITION,  
COOKING  
TIPS AND  
MORE

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## A NUTRITIONAL POWERHOUSE

Barley is a healthful addition to the diet. When it comes to good nutrition, this ancient grain packs a powerful punch.

- Barley is an excellent source of total dietary fiber, containing both soluble and insoluble fiber.
- Unlike many grains, which contain fiber only in the outer bran layer, barley contains fiber throughout the entire kernel. So even highly processed barley products that are missing the bran yield significant amounts of healthful fiber.
- Barley contains more total dietary fiber than other typical grains. A half-cup serving of cooked pearl barley contains 3 grams total dietary fiber. In comparison, a half cup of cooked brown long-grain rice contains 1.75 grams total dietary fiber and a half cup of cooked white long-grain rice contains less than 1 gram of total dietary fiber. *Source: USDA National Nutrient Database for Standard Reference*
- Like all plant products, barley is cholesterol-free and low in fat.
- Barley contains antioxidants and a number of important vitamins and minerals that are essential for good health. These include niacin, thiamin, selenium, iron, magnesium, zinc, phosphorus and copper.

## BARLEY FIGHTS DISEASE

Eating barley can help reduce significant health risks facing Americans today.

### ► Coronary heart disease

Barley is an excellent source of beta-glucan, a type of soluble fiber. Studies show that eating barley beta-glucan soluble fiber lowers total and LDL (bad) cholesterol and reduces the risk for coronary heart disease. In addition, studies show that eating barley helps manage high blood pressure, another risk factor for heart disease.

### ► Diabetes

Studies show that barley beta-glucan soluble fiber is effective in maintaining healthful blood sugar levels and in turn, is helpful in preventing or managing type 2 diabetes.

### ► Obesity

Studies show that high-fiber foods such as barley are effective in weight management and protecting against obesity. Fiber-rich foods are processed more slowly in the body, resulting in absorption of important nutrients over a longer period of time. They also tend to promote satiety or a feeling of fullness which may help reduce overeating.

## PRODUCTS

Barley may be purchased in several forms. **Pearl barley** is the most readily available form of the grain. Pearl barley refers to kernels that have been polished to remove the inedible outer hull along with most of the bran layer. In addition to kernels, pearl barley is available as quick cooking barley, flakes, grits and flour. **Whole grain** barley may also be called **hulled** or **hulless** barley. This refers to grain in which only the inedible outer hull is removed. Whole grain barley retains all or most of the bran as well as the endosperm and germ. Whole grain flakes, flour and grits are also available.

For more information  
and recipe ideas, visit  
[www.barleyfoods.org](http://www.barleyfoods.org).

## ► FINDING BARLEY

- Pearl barley kernels are readily available in most major supermarkets and may be found next to dry beans, lentils and rice.
- Barley flakes may be found in some supermarkets in the hot cereal section or in bulk containers.
- Barley flour may be found in some supermarkets with other packaged flour products or in bulk containers.
- Whole grain barley products (hulled and hullless barley) may be found in bulk containers in some supermarkets and natural foods stores. Whole grain barley may also be purchased online from some grain suppliers.
- Barley is used as a primary ingredient in commercially prepared foods. Look for it in hot and ready-to-eat cereals, pilaf mixes, and breakfast and energy bars.

## ► SERVING IDEAS

- Add cooked pearl or whole grain barley kernels to your favorite soups, stews, casseroles, salads and stir-frys for extra flavor and disease-fighting fiber.
- Serve cooked barley flakes or grits as a hot cereal similar to rolled or steel cut oats. Or use them as a fiber-rich ingredient in cookies, breads and desserts such as fruit crisps and crumbles.
- Use barley flour to add a subtle nutty flavor and fiber to baked goods. While barley flour contains gluten, the protein that makes baked goods rise, the type of gluten in barley does not promote adequate rising on its own. It's best to use barley flour in combination with all-purpose enriched wheat or whole wheat flour. For example, barley flour may be substituted for about  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the total flour used in yeast breads. For most quick breads, muffins and cookies, barley flour may be substituted for about  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the total amount of flour used.

## ► COOKING BARLEY

- To cook pearl barley kernels, bring 3 cups of water to a boil. Add 1 cup pearl barley and return to a boil. Reduce heat to low, cover and cook 45 minutes or until the barley is tender and the liquid is absorbed. Makes about 3 cups.
- To cook hulled (whole grain) barley kernels, bring 3 cups water to a boil. Add 1 cup hulled barley and return to boil. Reduce heat to low, cover and cook 50-55 minutes. Drain off any unabsorbed liquid at the end of the cooking time. Makes about 3 cups.
- To cook hullless (whole grain) barley kernels, bring  $4\frac{1}{2}$  cups of water to a boil. Add  $1\frac{1}{2}$  cups hullless barley and return to boil. Reduce heat to low, cover and cook about 50-55 minutes. Drain off any unabsorbed liquid at the end of the cooking time. Makes about 3 cups.

## Confetti Barley Salad

- 1 cup pearl barley kernels (if using whole grain barley, see directions below)
- 3 cups water
- 1 can (15- $\frac{1}{4}$  ounces) kidney beans, drained
- 1 can (15 ounces) mandarin oranges, drained
- $\frac{2}{3}$  cup finely chopped red onion
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup chopped red bell pepper
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup chopped green bell pepper
- 3 tablespoons chopped fresh cilantro leaves
- $\frac{2}{3}$  cup white wine vinegar
- $\frac{1}{3}$  cup olive oil
- 2 tablespoons granulated sugar
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1 teaspoon chili powder
- 1 teaspoon dry mustard
- 10 drops red pepper sauce

In medium saucepan with lid, bring water to a boil. Add pearl barley and return to boil. Reduce heat to low, cover and cook 45 minutes or until barley is tender and liquid is absorbed. In large bowl combine cooked barley, beans, oranges, onion, bell pepper and cilantro. Set aside. In a small saucepan mix together vinegar, olive oil, sugar, salt, pepper, chili powder, dry mustard and pepper sauce. Heat and stir until mixture bubbles. Pour hot dressing over barley-vegetable mixture. Cover and refrigerate at least 4 hours or overnight to allow salad to chill and flavors to blend. Makes 8 servings.

**Per serving:** calories 285, protein 7g, carbohydrates 44g, fiber 8g, fat 10g, cholesterol 0, sodium 449mg.

**Note:** If using hulled barley (whole grain), increase cooking time to 50-55 minutes. If using hullless barley (whole grain), increase barley amount to  $1\frac{1}{2}$  cups and water to  $4\frac{1}{2}$  cups. Increase cooking time to 50-55 minutes. Whole grain barley (hulled and hullless) tends to absorb less liquid than pearl barley and it may be necessary to pour off any unabsorbed water at the end of the cooking time.