

SHASTA SENIOR NUTRITION PROGRAM
NUTRITION NOTES
JUNE 2011

Relax With Flax



We are often overwhelmed by news and media coverage of the latest “miracle” food which will help us lose weight, control diabetes, decrease blood pressure, and decrease our risk for cancer. Unfortunately, these food fads normally fade out and rarely live up to their hype. One food which has stood the test of time, but is still not taken advantage of by most of us is Flaxseed. Flaxseed has been studied extensively and has been shown to be effective as a preventative measure for many chronic diseases. The great thing about flaxseed is that it can be easily sprinkled onto hot or cold cereal, yogurt, muffins, or any of your other typical daily foods adding a hearty flavor and many health benefits.

Cancer Protection

Flaxseed contains phytochemicals called Lignans which have been shown to be protective against certain hormone related cancers, such as breast cancer. It also acts as an antioxidant, preventing cancer cells from forming by blocking free radicals, or chemical compounds which damage the body’s tissues and are the main culprit for many cancers.

Heart Disease Prevention

Flaxseed contains large amounts of plant omega-3 fatty acids, which protect the heart. Consuming a sufficient amount of omega-3 fatty acids can help decrease bad LDL cholesterol, while increasing good HDL cholesterol. They have also been shown to be protective against strokes and hypertension. There are 1.8 grams of omega-3s per tablespoon of flaxseed, providing for the recommended daily intake by the Food and Nutrition Board.

Weight Loss Promotion

Flaxseed is high in fiber, which can help fill you up faster so that you eat less during a meal and extend the time between meals by making you feel full for longer. Losing unneeded weight, especially fat is one of the best ways to decrease your risk of chronic diseases such as heart disease and diabetes. It also helps to maintain blood sugar for people living with diabetes.

Orange Bran Flax Muffins

- 1 ½ cups oat bran
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 cup flaxseed, ground
- 1 cup natural bran
- 1 tbsp. baking powder
- ½ tsp. salt
- 2 oranges, whole (washed, quartered and seeded)
- 1 cup brown sugar (or 1 cup SPLENDA[®])
- 1 cup buttermilk
- ½ cup canola oil
- 2 eggs
- 1 tsp. baking soda
- 1 ½ cups raisins

In a large bowl, combine oat bran, flour, flaxseed, bran, baking powder and salt. Set aside. In a blender or food processor, combine oranges, brown sugar, buttermilk, oil, eggs and baking soda. Blend well. Pour orange mixture into dry ingredients. Mix until well blended. Stir in raisins (white chocolate chips can be substituted for the raisins). Fill paper lined muffin tins almost to the top. Bake in 375 degree oven for 18 to 20 minutes or until wooden pick inserted in the center of the muffin comes out clean. Cool in tins 5 minutes before removing to cooling rack. Yields 18 muffins.

Another Banana - Date Flaxseed Bread

- ¾ cup Flax, ground
- 2/3 cup Banana - mashed
- ½ cup Sugar (or ½ cup SPLENDA[®])
- ¼ cup Vegetable oil
- 2 Eggs
- 1½ cups Flour
- ¼ cup Flax, whole seeds
- ½ tsp. Baking powder
- ½ tsp. Baking soda
- ½ tsp. Salt
- ½ cup Whole pitted dates - chopped

Beat the banana, sugar, oil and eggs at medium speed until well-blended. Combine flour, ground flaxseeds, whole flaxseeds, baking powder, baking soda and salt. Gradually add to sugar mixture, beating until well-blended. Stir in chopped dates. Spoon the batter into 8 x 4 inch loaf pan coated with cooking spray. Bake at 350 degrees for 55 minutes or until a wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean. Cool 10 minutes in pan on a wire rack, and remove from pan. Cool completely on wire rack.