



From the Food Bank Kitchen

Cooking with Oats

January is National Oat Month! Oats are an inexpensive whole grain; this means that they do not have their bran and germ removed during processing and they have a lot of vitamins, minerals, and fiber! Oats can be prepared and used in many ways. Most oats are steamed and flattened to create rolled oats like old-fashioned oats (4-5 minutes to cook on stove) and quick oats (2-3 minutes on the stove). Steel-cut oats are also a healthy choice with a chewier, nuttier texture that can be cooked in about 5 minutes. Oats can easily be prepared on the stove or in a microwave. Besides at breakfast, there many ways to use them in other recipes. Oats are an easy way to add fiber and whole grains to your diet. On average, a serving of oatmeal and milk costs about \$0.30.

With so many health benefits, what's not to love?

- The soluble fiber helps lower LDL ("bad") cholesterol, may lower blood pressure, and reduce the risk of heart disease.
- The soluble fiber in oats also helps reduce the risk of developing type 2 diabetes and help regulate blood glucose levels in some people with diabetes by slowing the absorption of sugar into the blood.
- In a 1/2 cup of oats, there are 4 grams of fiber and 5 grams of protein. This much fiber and protein will keep you full longer, which may help to control weight. For more protein power, add nuts or peanut butter to oatmeal, or pair with an egg, cottage cheese, or yogurt.

Want to dress up your oatmeal? Just add a few simple ingredients to turn a basic bowl of oatmeal into a delicious one.

Try it Sweet...

Pumpkin Pie:

Stir in ¼ cup canned pumpkin puree, ½ tsp pumpkin pie spice (or cinnamon), and 1 tsp honey.

Chocolate Peanut Butter:

Stir in 1 Tbsp brown sugar, ½ Tbsp cocoa powder, a pinch of salt, and 2 Tbsp peanut butter.

Banana Bread:

Stir in a mashed, ripe banana along with a pinch of nutmeg. Sprinkle with cinnamon, sugar, and nuts.

...Or Savory

Cheddar and Scallion:

Stir in ¼ cup grated cheddar cheese and ¼ teaspoon paprika. Season with ⅛ teaspoon salt and ⅛ teaspoon pepper. Top with chopped scallions.

Fried Egg and Avocado:

Serve egg on top of cooked oatmeal. Also top with salsa and slices of avocado.

These are healthier options than store-bought flavored oatmeal packets like apple and cinnamon or strawberries and cream, which have about 3 teaspoons worth of sugar and artificial ingredients.

Source: <http://wholegrainscouncil.org>

Overnight Oats

Serves 1

Source: theyummylife.com

- ¼ c uncooked old fashioned rolled oats
- ⅓ c milk
- ¼ c fat-free Greek yogurt (plain)
- 1 Tbsp peanut butter and/or cocoa powder
- 1 tsp honey, (or substitute any preferred sweetener)
- ¼ cup diced ripe banana, or enough to fill jar (approx. half of a small banana)

Directions: In a half pint (1 cup) jar, add oats, milk, yogurt, peanut butter and/or cocoa powder and honey. Put lid on jar and shake until well combined. Remove lid, add bananas and stir until mixed throughout. Return lid to jar and refrigerate overnight or up to 2 days. Eat chilled or heat up in the microwave, as preferred. Optional: top with 2 Tbsp nuts or granola.

Nutrition Facts: Calories 310, Fat 11 gm, Saturated Fat 3 gm, Sodium 130 mg, Carbohydrate 43 gm, Fiber 4 gm, Sugars 23 gm, Protein 16 gm (Nutrition Facts are for 1% milk and fat free yogurt).

Classic Meatloaf

Serves 8

Source: quakeroats.com

- 1½ lb lean ground beef or turkey
- ¾ c uncooked rolled oats
- ¾ c finely chopped onion
- ½ c ketchup

- 1 egg, lightly beaten
- 1 Tbsp Worcestershire sauce or soy sauce
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- ½ tsp salt and ½ tsp ground black pepper

Directions: Heat oven to 350°F. Grease a 9x5-in loaf pan. Combine all ingredients in large bowl and mix thoroughly. Shape meatloaf mixture into the pan. Bake 60 minutes or until meatloaf is “medium” (160°F for beef, 170°F for turkey), it should look hot pink in center and the juices show no pink color. Let stand 5 minutes before slicing. Cover and refrigerate leftovers and use within 3 days, or freeze up to 3 months. *Note: Using a shallower pan may reduce cook time to 50 minutes.*

Nutrition Facts: *Calories 210, Fat 10 gm, Saturated Fat, 4 gm, Sodium 390 mg, Carbohydrate 12 gm, Fiber 1 gm, Sugars 5 gm, Protein 19 gm*

Oat Crusted Chicken

Serves 4

Source: myrecipes.com

- 2 Tbsp oil OR milk OR 1 egg, beaten
- A pinch of garlic
- ¾ c grated Parmesean cheese
- ¼ tsp salt

- ¼ tsp ground pepper
- 1 c quick/instant oats
- 1 lb boneless chicken thighs or breasts

Directions: Preheat oven to 450°F. In a shallow bowl, mix the garlic, cheese, salt, pepper, and oats. Coat the chicken with oil, milk, or egg. Place the chicken on a baking sheet coated with cooking spray. Bake for 15 minutes or until browned. **NOTE:** Add dried Italian seasoning or basil and oregano for an Italian flavor.

Nutrition Facts: *Calories 300, Fat 10 gm, Saturated Fat 4 gm, Sodium 520 mg, Carbohydrate 15 gm, Fiber 2 gm, Sugars 1 gm, Protein 34 gm (with 1 egg)*

Quick Banana Oat Muffin

Serves 2

Adapted from popsugar.com

- 1 ripe banana
- ½ tsp vanilla extract
- ½ c old fashioned or quick oats
- ¼ tsp baking powder

- 1 egg
- 1 Tbsp chocolate chips or berries (optional)
- Dash of cinnamon
- 1 Tbsp peanut butter (optional)

Directions: In a microwaveable bowl or mug, mash one banana with a fork and mix in an egg. Whip the mixture well. Stir in vanilla extract, then add the oats, baking powder, and dash of cinnamon. Stir until fully evenly mixed. Stir in the chocolate chips or berries, if using (frozen berries work fine). Microwave for 1 minute and 45 seconds. (CAUTION: the bowl will be hot). Spread peanut butter on top (if desired) and enjoy while warm.

Nutrition Facts: *Calories 230, Fat 9 gm, Saturated Fat 3 gm, Sodium 110 mg, Carbohydrate 30 gm, Fiber 4 gm, Sugars 12 gm, Protein 8 gm*

Peanut Butter Energy Balls

Serves 8

Source: food.com

- ½ c peanut butter
- ½ c old-fashioned rolled oats
- ¼ sunflower seeds (or substitute with chopped nuts)

- ¼ c raisins (or Craisins®)
- 1 Tbsp honey
- 1 Tbsp flax seed (optional)

Directions: Mix peanut butter and honey together. Add oats, sunflower seeds, raisins, and flax seeds together, then add to peanut butter and honey mixture. Roll mixture into balls and let them sit in the refrigerator for 30 minutes before serving.

Nutrition Facts: *Calories 160, Fat 11 gm, Saturated Fat 2 gm, Sodium 100 mg, Carbohydrate 13 gm, Fiber 2 gm, Sugars 7 gm, Protein 6 gm*