

Pulses



What are pulses?

Pulses (sometimes called legumes) are beans (e.g. kidney beans, soya beans), peas (e.g. chickpeas) and lentils.

Pulses are:

- **High in protein** - half a can of black eyed beans will provide around a fifth of the daily requirement for an average adult
- **Low in fat and saturated fat**
- **High in fibre**
- **A source of vitamins and minerals**
- **One of your 5 A DAY** (maximum) in an 80g portion (3 heaped tablespoons)



Pulses can be used to make foods such as falafel, hummus, dahl and vegetarian burgers. When buying pre-prepared foods it's best to choose those that are lower in fat, saturated fat, sugar and salt. You can look at the traffic light label on the packaging to help – try to go for products with more greens and ambers, and fewer reds.

Healthy, sustainable diets

We should all be aiming to consume a healthy, balanced and varied plant-rich diet to improve our health and the health of the planet. A plant-rich diet can also include some lean meat, dairy foods, fish and eggs depending on your dietary choices but it's best to vary our protein sources. This includes eating pulses, nuts, seeds and other alternative protein sources (such as soya- or mycoprotein-based foods that are not high in saturated fat and salt). Pulses typically have a lower environmental footprint than other crops because their production does not require nitrogen fertilisers. Pulses also improve the quality of the soil which can benefit the growth of subsequent crops.



How can I include pulses in my diet?

Pulses are low cost and can be used in a variety of meals in the same way as other protein-rich foods such as meat and fish. Canned pulses are convenient because they are already cooked. Try to include different types of pulses in your diet; why not try these dishes:

- Lentil bolognese with wholewheat spaghetti
- Black beans, avocado, mixed peppers and eggs or feta in a wholemeal wrap
- Turkey mince and mixed bean chilli on a jacket potato
- Chickpea, cashew nut and butternut squash curry with brown rice and plain yogurt
- Fish and pinto bean tagine with greens and cous cous

DID YOU KNOW

Soya beans are used to make tofu and tempeh? These can be used in stir fries and curries.

- Mushroom and butter bean burgers with sweet potato wedges and salad
- Cannellini bean dip with tomatoes on rye crispbread
- Borlotti bean, pumpkin and spinach soup and wholemeal bread
- Veggie sausage and vegetable stew with haricot bean and potato mash

DID YOU KNOW

Baked beans are typically made from haricot beans? These are tasty on wholemeal toast – choose reduced, or no added, sugar and salt versions.