

Nutrition Notes: Quinoa & Green Lentil Medley

About Quinoa and Green Lentils

Organic quinoa is a plant food source of complete protein (one of the sensational seven) containing all 9 essential amino acids (EAAs). Quinoa can be white, red or black. White quinoa is the most economical. A blend with red and/or black has a chewier texture. Although not a complete protein, the green lentils do contribute some additional protein EAAs. In this recipe green lentils will hold their shape better than red lentils.

Preparation for One Person (2 servings or 2 portions)

Allow 2 servings per person since most people consume that amount of 2 servings in a meal. Multiply the recipe for the number of people being served. These foods count as both protein and carbohydrate. Keep the carbohydrate property of the quinoa, lentils and the vegetables in mind when planning which other foods to prepare for the same meal.

Quinoa and Lentil Medley (counts as 2 protein, 3 carbohydrate, 4 vegetable)

1/2 cup or 125 ml quinoa (white alone or with some red and/or black)

1/4 cup or 125 ml green lentils

1-1/2 cups or 375 ml water

pinch of sea salt

1 teaspoon or 5 ml virgin olive oil or coconut oil

1/4 cup or 65 ml finely chopped onion (cooking, Spanish or red)

1/2 cup or 125 ml thinly sliced celery or lovage

1/2 cup or 125 ml shredded or thinly sliced carrot

1/2 cup or 125 ml shredded or finely chopped kale, broccolini or other dark leafy green

1/4 cup or 125 ml fresh minced parsley (curly or flat)

Optional flavourings:

1/4 cup or 125 ml chopped, vine ripened tomato

1/4 teaspoon or 2.5 ml dried celery seed, black pepper, dried basil or dried oregano

1 tablespoon or 15 ml fresh squeezed lemon juice

1/4 cup or 125 ml chopped, soaked almonds

1 tablespoon or 15 ml sunflower or pumpkin, squash or chia seeds

Add oil and vegetables except kale to pot. Saute for 5 minutes until onions soften. Add the quinoa, green lentils, water and seasonings. It is important to add almonds now if you are using them so that they will be more digestible.

Bring to a boil, reduce heat and simmer for 10 minutes. Stir in the kale. Simmer for another 2 minutes. Remove from heat. Let stand for 5 minutes. Fluff with a fork. Some people prefer adding the parsley at the end. Sprinkle with sunflower or pumpkin/squash/chia seeds for extra crunch. Serve alone or with a dark green leafy salad.

This will make about 2 cups or 500 ml cooked quinoa and lentil medley. Adding more water or cooking it longer tends to make it mushy and it loses the texture of individual quinoa seeds. This recipe is also good cold for lunch. It also tastes great stuffed into half a small squash and baked or microwaved, cook the squash first, stuff with the quinoa and lentil medley and reheat to serve. The squash has to be counted as a carbohydrate. If stuffing a hollowed out zucchini or bell pepper, it does not count as an extra carbohydrate.