

# Plant "Imagination"

## **THE PUMPKIN**

Although we associate pumpkin with pies and rolls which are packed with simple sugars, there are many other ways of using this super food to increase your overall nutrition. This incredible food is loaded with vitamins, minerals, and other healthy nutrients that are sure to increase your health this fall. Here are just some of the many nutritional components of pumpkin that are sure to make you look and feel beautiful this coming season.

Carotenoids is what gives pumpkins that bright orange color and gives your skin that “glow” . Carotenoids may also help reduce the appearance of premature aging, and may decrease risk for cardiovascular disease and infections.

Essential Fatty Acids are found in the seeds of the pumpkin, these fatty acids may provide your body protection against arthritis and high blood pressure. It also may improve your brain power and promote overall healthy skin.

High amounts of fiber found in the flesh have been shown to lower LDL cholesterol levels in the blood while also helping to regulate blood sugar levels. Fiber is also great for treating constipation and indigestion.

Pepitas, more commonly known as pumpkin seeds, are high in muscle building and tissue repairing macro nutrient. In just one ounce of pumpkins seeds alone, you are filling your diet with roughly seven grams of protein.

Pumpkin contains Vitamin A and during cold and flu season, it is particularly important to consume enough of this vitamin in your diet. It may not only improve your vision, but it will also help to boost your immune system so that you can fight off nasty infections this winter.

There are many other wonderful characteristics to eating pumpkin all season long. Not only will it keep your skin hydrated and wrinkle-less, but it may also lower your risk of some cancers, reduce inflammation, and perhaps even decrease your risk for depression which is all too common during these cold and dreary months. There are many easy ways to incorporate pumpkin into your diet. For example, add canned pumpkin to a hummus recipe or banana nut loaf to make it taste more like a fall menu item. Even add it to your yogurt or oatmeal!

**TRICK OR TREAT!**