

Health Benefits of Rutabaga



Rutabaga is a sweet, root vegetable which is part of the cruciferous (cabbage) family. Its flavor is a cross between a turnip and a cabbage. Like other cruciferous vegetables, rutabagas contain compounds that fight cancer. They are low calorie and highly nutritious. They contain multiple forms of antioxidants as well as vitamins, minerals and fiber that help prevent inflammation and chronic diseases.

WHAT MAKES RUTABAGA GREAT?

Nutrition

1 cup rutabaga has 66 calories, 2g protein, 3g fiber, no fat, and no cholesterol.

Vitamins

Rutabagas contain vitamins C and E, antioxidants that protect against free radicals that cause aging and disease. The B6 in rutabagas is essential for many reactions in the body, especially protein metabolism, production of neurotransmitters and helping maintain normal levels of homocysteine in the blood.

Minerals

Rutabagas are a good source of potassium which helps with fluid balance and blood pressure control. Magnesium in rutabagas is required for energy production. It helps maintain a regular heart rhythm, control blood glucose and blood pressure. Rutabagas contain calcium for pH balance and strong bones and small amounts of iron and zinc.

Fiber

Rutabagas contain a good amount of fiber which feeds our healthy microbiome, contributes to feelings of fullness and satiety, and prevents constipation. Fiber also helps reduce risk of diverticulosis and colon cancer.

Phytonutrients (plant compounds)

Many of the phytonutrients in rutabagas are different forms of antioxidants. These include lutein and beta-carotene for healthy eyes and glucosinolates that may help to prevent the development of cancer.

Rutabagas have also been found to contain tryptophan, melatonin and serotonin, neurotransmitters that support

sleep, mood and hunger regulation.

BUYING & USING RUTABAGA

As a winter root vegetable, rutabagas can be found in most grocery stores, especially in the fall and winter months. Seek out smooth, firm roots that feel heavy.

Rutabagas can be consumed raw or cooked, and both the root and the greens are edible. Store in the refrigerator or cool temperature (garage or basement) until ready for use.

To prepare, wash and peel roots. These can be cooked in a variety of ways depending on the flavor profile of your dish. Try substituting rutabaga where you would usually use potatoes. Here are some common ways to prepare rutabagas:

- ◆ Cube for use in soups and stews, casseroles or stir fry
- ◆ Roast with a small amount of oil bring out robust flavors
- ◆ Boil or steam for mashing or tossing with other vegetables
- ◆ Serve cooked or raw cubes in salads
- ◆ Grate raw rutabaga into coleslaw, alone or mixed with red and green cabbage for a colorful, festive side dish
- ◆ Slice thinly for a raw, crunchy addition to sandwiches
- ◆ Cut into fries and crisp them in an air fryer
- ◆ Combine with other root vegetables like carrots, sweet potato or parsnips, baked, roasted or boiled



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Mashed Rutabaga

Adapted from glutenfreelife.com

Ingredients:

3 medium rutabagas, peeled, diced
 1-2 Tbsp margarine
 1 Tbsp sweetener (honey, maple syrup)
 1/4 tsp sugar
 1/4 tsp turmeric
 1/4 cup oat, almond or soy milk
 Salt and pepper to taste

Directions:

1. In a large pot, add rutabaga and cover with water. Bring to boil and cook until fork tender, about 30-40 minutes. Drain.
2. Add remaining ingredients and mash until desired consistency.
3. Salt and pepper to taste.

Crisp Rutabaga Rosti

Adapted from purplecarrot.com

Ingredients:

3/4 cup raw quinoa	1 pound baby spinach,
1 1/2 cup rutabaga, grated	Fresh rosemary, chopped
1 red onion, chopped	2 Tbsp vegan mayonnaise
3 Tbsp oil	1 Tbsp Dijon mustard
1 head garlic, chopped	1 Tbsp balsamic vinegar
	Salt and pepper to taste

Directions:

1. Rinse and drain quinoa. Place in saucepan with 2 cups water and bring to boil. Lower heat and simmer until cooked, about 20 minutes. Transfer to large bowl.
2. Heat oil in medium skillet. Add rutabaga, onions and a sprinkle of salt. Cook and stir until tender and starting to brown, about 10 minutes.
3. Add garlic, spinach and rosemary and cook 1-2 minutes more.
4. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper or grease. Stir rutabaga mixture with quinoa. Form into small cakes and flatten into a patty.
5. Place cakes on baking sheet and brush tops with oil. Place under the broiler and bake until crispy, about 5-10 minutes. Then flip and broil other side.
6. Mix mayonnaise, mustard and balsamic in a small



Rutabaga Lasagna

Adapted from inspiralized.com

Ingredients:

1 large rutabaga, peeled
 2 1/2 cups tomato sauce
 1/2 Tbsp olive oil
 8 cups kale, spinach or other greens, chopped
 2 cloves garlic, minced
 1/4 tsp red pepper flakes
 1 large shallot, minced
 Salt and pepper to taste

Cashew Cheese:

1 1/2 cups raw cashews, soaked 2 hours, drained
 2 Tbsp nutritional yeast
 1/2 tsp dried oregano
 1/2 tsp dried basil
 1/2 tsp dried parsley
 1/2 tsp garlic powder
 3 Tbsp lemon juice
 1/2 cup vegetable broth
 Salt and pepper to taste

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 425°F.
2. Slice rutabaga into thin slices.
3. Heat tomato sauce in a medium pan and keep warm.
4. Place cheese ingredients in a blender or food processor and blend until smooth and creamy.
5. In a large skillet over medium heat, add olive oil. Toss in kale, garlic, red pepper flakes, shallots and season with salt and pepper. Wilt kale, about 2-3 minutes.
6. To build the lasagna, add sauce to the bottom of a casserole dish. Layer the rutabaga on top and pour a layer of the cheese mixture and layer of kale mixture. Top with sauce and repeat layers. The top layer should be rutabaga and sauce.
7. Cover the casserole dish and bake 40-45 minutes. Test for doneness by piercing with a fork. If you can easily pierce the rutabaga, it is done.
8. Cut into pieces and serve with a hearty bread.

REFERENCES

https://ods.od.nih.gov/factsheets/B6_Mg

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7250152/>

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8575925/>