

Health Benefits of Parsnips



Parsnips are root vegetables similar in shape and texture to carrots but with a light beige color. They have a sweet, nutty flavor with an impressive range of vitamins, minerals, antioxidants and fiber. Although they have been used since ancient times, this “white vegetable” has been largely overlooked in many of today’s culinary dishes.

Parsnips have a low glycemic index, keeping blood sugars steady and providing longer periods of fueling and satiety. The combination of nutrients along with their low calories and high fiber provide protection against high cholesterol, heart disease, inflammation, diabetes, cancer and obesity.

WHAT MAKES PARSNIPS GREAT?

Nutrition

1 cup raw parsnips has 100 Calories, 2 gm protein, 7 gm fiber, no fat and no cholesterol.

Minerals

According to the USDA, parsnips contain high levels of several minerals including potassium for healthy blood pressure and nerve function. Calcium, magnesium, manganese and phosphorus are essential for bone formation. Parsnips also contain, zinc, important for immune function and healing, and iron for transport of oxygen to organs and tissues.

Vitamins

Parsnips contain many vitamins including B vitamins folate, important to prevent birth defects, thiamin for growth and metabolism, pantothenic acid for energy production and B6 for immune function and neurotransmitter production. They also contain antioxidant vitamins C, E and K, which combat free radicals associated with aging and disease. Vitamin K also helps with healthy blood clotting.

Phytonutrients

Besides vitamins and minerals, parsnips provide additional antioxidants such as *panaxadiol* (also found in ginseng products) and *methyl-falcarindiol*, important for gut health and potentially anti-carcinogenic.

Fiber

Parsnips are one of the few vegetables considered to be high in soluble fiber, lowering the glycemic index, and feeding our healthy gut microbiome. Soluble fiber also plays a role in lowering cholesterol, appetite and weight control, blood sugar modulation and reduced risk of multiple chronic diseases.

The insoluble fiber in parsnips can aid in preventing diverticulitis, constipation and in potentially preventing colon cancer.

BUYING & USING PARSNIPS

Parsnips are generally available in the fall and winter, but you may find it year-round in larger stores. If growing your own, leave in the ground until exposed to temperatures below 40F or even frost. This helps sweeten the flavor. Store unwashed in the crisper section of the refrigerator 2-6 months.

To prepare, wash prior to use. Scrubbing is preferred over peeling or scraping since the sweetest flavor is just below the skin. Chop off stem and tip. Chop or slice for use.

Parsnips can be consumed raw or cooked. To prepare raw, grate or chop into salads, slaws or for dipping in hummus or vegetable dip. Peel into long strands to garnish entrées or cook like pasta. Toss chopped or sliced parsnips into soups or stews. Parsnips can also be roasted or boiled like potatoes, or mashed for a tasty side dish. Cooked parsnips can also be pureed and used as a soup thickener.



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Carrot & Parsnip Latkes

mayihavethatrecipe.com

Ingredients:

3 cup parsnips, shredded	1 tsp salt
1 ½ cup carrots, shredded	¾ tsp coriander
1 cup cilantro, chopped	¾ tsp cumin
6 scallions, chopped	½ tsp turmeric
½ cup flour of choice	½ tsp cinnamon
¾ cup vegan mayo	Salt & pepper to taste
½ - ¾ cup oil for frying	

Instructions:

1. Heat oil in large pan on medium heat.
2. Combine all ingredients in large bowl and mix well.
3. Working with 1/4 cup at a time, form into patties
4. Fry 4-5 minutes on each side until golden brown.
5. Place on paper towel to absorb excess oil.
6. Salt and pepper to taste.
7. Serve with unsweetened applesauce or sour cream.

Pan-Roasted Parsnips

Adapted from binkysculinarycarnival.com

Ingredients:

½ pound scrubbed parsnips, julienned
 1 Tbsp coconut oil or margarine
 1 Tbsp brown or coconut sugar
 Salt and pepper to taste
 Parsley or cilantro for garnish

Instructions:

1. Place parsnips in a non-stick pan with 1/4 cup water. Cover and turn on high heat. Once boiling, remove from heat, drain water and set aside.
2. Add coconut oil and brown sugar to large skillet. Toss in parsnips and sauté until caramelized and tender.
3. Sprinkle with salt and ground pepper. Serve with garnish of parsley or cilantro as desired.

Creamy Parsnip Soup

frommybowl.com

Ingredients:

2 cups parsnips, cut into 3" sticks	½ cup raw cashews, soaked overnight in water
2 cups red potatoes, quartered	2 cup vegetable stock
½ yellow onion, peeled, halved	2-3 cup water or non-dairy milk
1 head garlic, peeled, crushed	Juice of ½ lemon
	1 Tbsp fresh rosemary, chopped

Instructions:

1. Preheat oven to 425°F and line baking pan with parchment paper.
2. Place garlic on a sheet of aluminum foil and drizzle with oil. Wrap and seal tightly, and place on baking sheet.
3. Add parsnips, potatoes and onion to baking sheet. Drizzle with oil, salt, pepper and rosemary. Toss until evenly coated.
4. Roast on top rack of oven for 35-40 minutes or until vegetables are golden and tender.
5. Carefully transfer vegetables to blender. Unwrap garlic and squeeze tender cloves into blender. Add drained cashews and broth. Blend until smooth, adding water or non-dairy milk to reach desired soup texture. Add salt and pepper to taste.
6. Transfer blended soup to large saucepan and stir in lemon juice. Serve hot.

REFERENCES

- <https://www.aicr.org>
- https://ods.od.nih.gov/fact_sheets
- <https://www.canr.msu.edu>