

NUTRITION NUGGET #20

What is Quinoa? What are its Nutritional Benefits?

Answer: Quinoa is a seed that is eaten like a grain. Quinoa is a complete and gluten-free protein, great for vegetarian meals. Quinoa can replace rice or oatmeal.



Facts:

- Quinoa (pronounced KEEN-wah) is a good source of manganese, magnesium, copper, zinc, potassium, iron and folate. Quinoa has twice as much fiber as other grains, which makes you feel fuller.
- Unlike many plant foods, Quinoa is a complete source of protein. Quinoa has no gluten, great for those following gluten-free diets.
- **Cooking with Quinoa.** Give quinoa a good rinse to remove any remaining saponins, a soapy resin that gives quinoa a bitter taste. Add about 1/4 teaspoon salt to each cup of quinoa. Bring 1 cup of rinsed quinoa and 2 cups of water to a boil, then simmer on low heat for 15 minutes until light and fluffy.
- Quinoa may taste bland, so add other spices during cooking such as a clove of smashed garlic, a sprig of fresh rosemary, and a dash of black pepper. You may also add quinoa to stews, soups and salads.
- **Find online recipes, such as Quinoa and Black Bean Salad in the SNAP-Ed Connection Recipe Finder.**
- There are different types of quinoa:
 - a) **White quinoa**—most common kind found in stores, often it's just called quinoa and at times ivory quinoa
 - b) **Red quinoa**—holds its shape better than white quinoa after cooking, suitable for cold salads or other recipes with grains.
 - c) **Black quinoa**—slightly earthier and sweeter than quinoa
 - d) **Quinoa flakes**—cook faster than kernels; used in breakfast.

Apply: A participant asks you what quinoa is and what it's used for. What can you tell the participant?

References: <http://www.eatright.org/Public/content.aspx?id=6442471542&terms=quinoa>; <http://wholegrainscouncil.org/whole-grains-101/quinoa-march-grain-of-the-month>; <http://nutritiondata.self.com/facts/cereal-grains-and-pasta/10352/2>; <http://recipefinder.nal.usda.gov/recipes/quinoa-and-black-bean-salad>. Images: http://www.lotustradingltd.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/Quinoa_packages_tab1.jpg; http://cdn.ohsheglows.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/01/IMG_9459.jpg. Accessed: 05-07-14.