

## OCTOBER AND PUMPKINS GO HAND-IN-HAND

Brought to you by Froedtert and Community Memorial Hospital Dietitians

What could make a more delectable (and appropriate) seasonal meal on a chilly autumn night than a bowl of hearty pumpkin soup?

Pumpkin squash have been cultivated in America since before the first colonists arrived. Although purists may choose to roast and clean a whole pumpkin, cooks who use pureed, canned pumpkin should not be discouraged. In fact, the smooth and creamy texture of this soup works well with a canned squash. If you opt for fresh, choose a smallish gourd (around two pounds), as the flesh from smaller pumpkins is more tender and flavorful.

One advantage to using fresh pumpkin is the ability to utilize the seeds. Roasting pumpkin seeds – a particularly fun project to do with kids – produces a healthy snack that provides a rich source of vitamins and minerals.

The bright orange flesh of the pumpkin also hints at the health benefits waiting inside. The yellow-orange pigment is characteristic of foods rich in beta-carotene, which is converted to vitamin A in the body. Vitamin A plays an important role in eye and skin health. Add the benefits of fiber, potassium and vitamin C, and you've got a food that deserves a place on your plate year-round. Serve this week's recipe with a crunchy green salad and a warm slice of whole grain toast for a truly sweet and satisfying Halloween treat.

### Roasted Pumpkin Soup

2 Tbsp. olive oil  
2 tsp. ground cinnamon  
¾ cup chopped onion  
½ cup chopped carrot  
¼ cup chopped celery  
2 Tbsp. fresh minced ginger  
1 Tbsp. minced garlic  
1 can (15 oz.) pumpkin  
3 ½ cups low sodium chicken stock  
Salt and freshly ground pepper, to taste

In a medium saucepan, heat 2 Tbsp. olive oil over medium-high heat. When hot, add the cinnamon, onions, carrots, celery, ginger and garlic to the pan. Sauté, stirring occasionally, until lightly caramelized, about 3 to 4 minutes. Add the canned pumpkin, stirring into the vegetables. Add chicken stock to the pan and bring the stock to a boil. Reduce to a simmer and cook the soup for 15 to 20 minutes, or until the vegetables are soft.

Remove the soup from the heat and process in batches in the food processor. Season with salt and pepper, to taste. Garnish with chopped fresh sage and a dollop of low-fat sour cream (if desired).

**Makes 5 servings. Per serving:** 111 calories, 6 g total fat (<1 g saturated fat), 11 g carbohydrate, 3 g protein, 4 g dietary fiber, 437 mg sodium.

Tip from: <http://www.aicr.org/>