

JOEL FUHRMAN, MD

Pumpkin is a healthy fall treat

Enjoy the health benefits of pumpkins just like our forefathers before us.

Native American used pumpkin as a healthy staple in their diets for centuries before the pilgrims landed. Pumpkins continued to be an important crop for the pilgrims because they stored well and provided a nutritious food source during the winter months.

Today, pumpkin flavoring is in everything from candy and coffee to ice cream and doughnuts. Don't be fooled by this; pumpkins and their seeds are nutrient-dense foods.

Pumpkins and related squashes are good sources of

beta-carotene, alpha-carotene, lutein and zeaxanthin, antioxidants belonging to a group of pigments called carotenoids, which are important for immune function.

Carotenoids defend the body's tissues against oxidative damage, helping to prevent chronic diseases and premature aging. Lutein and zeaxanthin are the only known carotenoids located in the human retina.

They help protect the eye from damage and improve several aspects of visual performance.

Pumpkin makes a great pie but, don't stop there. Pumpkin puree can be stirred into soups,

stews or chilis. You can whip up a pumpkin smoothie by blending pumpkin puree with a banana, spinach or romaine lettuce, a few dates, some non-dairy milk and cinnamon and nutmeg.

I recommend cooking your own pumpkin puree or using the puree packed in non-BPA containing cartons.

Make an easy pumpkin puree: Choose the lighter colored "pie pumpkins" or "sugar pumpkins," they are sweeter and less watery than the orange jack-o'-lantern pumpkins.

Cut the top from the pumpkin and scrape out the stringy membranes and seeds.

Cut the pumpkin into large pieces and place in a roasting pan.

Pour 1/2 cup water into the bottom of the pan and cover with foil.

Bake 45-60 minutes or until pumpkin is soft and easily pierced with a fork.

Scrape the soft pulp from the skin into a food processor or blender and puree.

Leftover pumpkin puree may be frozen in an airtight container for up to 12 months.

When preparing pumpkin puree, don't throw away the seeds. Pumpkin seeds, also known as pepitas, are not only flavorful, they are a super food.

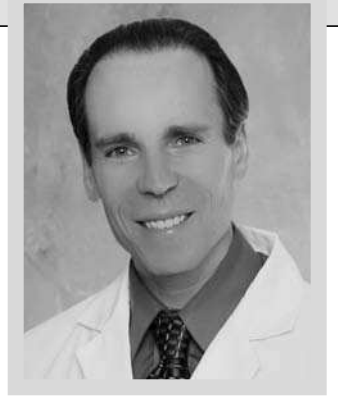
Pumpkin seeds are a good source of omega-3 fatty acids, phytochemicals, zinc, calcium and iron.

How to roast pumpkin seeds:
Rinse seeds under cold water and pick out the pulp and strings.

Place seeds in a single layer on a non-stick baking sheet and, if desired, sprinkle with your choice of no-salt seasonings.

Bake at 225 degrees F. until lightly toasted, about 45 minutes, checking and stirring frequently.

Sprinkle on salads, mix into healthy baked recipes or use as a topping for soups and entrees.



Enjoy the delicious flavors and health benefits of fresh pumpkins, pumpkin seeds and other winter squashes, and ignore those SAD (standard American diet) pumpkin-flavored fake foods.

Dr. Fuhrman is a New York Times best-selling author and board certified family physician specializing in lifestyle and nutritional medicine.

DISTINGUISHED TOASTMASTERS REPRESENT FLORENCE



COURTESY PHOTOS

Toastmasters Paul Pfeiffer (above), Anne Machalek and Cathy French attended the District 7 Toastmaster Conference on Nov. 5 in Portland.

room. These times allow all who would like to attend or join the group find a time that works for them. Everyone is welcome to come visit.

Three members of the Siuslaw Tale Spinners Toastmasters club represented Florence at the District 7 Toastmaster Conference in Portland on Nov. 5. District 7 covers lower Washington, northern California and most of Oregon.

Paul Pfeiffer won 3 increasingly difficult speech contests on his way to representing the Florence Toastmasters at the Humorous Speech Contest held at the Conference. He was up against eight other talented speakers and represented Florence with confidence and humor with his speech titled, "Honestly, Who Am I?"

Two other Tale Spinners, Anne Machalek and Cathy French, were awarded the Distinguished Toastmaster Award.

Toastmasters International says the Distinguished Toastmaster Designation recognizes a superior level of achievement in both communi-

cation and leadership. This is the highest designation a Toastmaster can achieve.

It takes over 40 increasingly challenging speeches, many modules, advanced programs, mentoring another member, 10 leadership projects, being a club officer, holding a district office, a high performance leadership project and providing specific support to another club. Less than one percent of all Toastmasters International finish their Distinguished Toastmaster requirements.

Toastmasters is a leadership and communication organization designed to help all people grow in their daily, and/or professional lives.

The Siuslaw Tale Spinners meet the second and fourth Thursdays each month from noon to 12:55 p.m. at Siuslaw Valley Fire and Rescue Main Station on Highway 101, and the first and third Thursdays from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. at the Port of Siuslaw conference

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3. All pets and the grand prize winner will be featured in the December 3rd issue.
4. You may also enter by mail. Simply fill out this contest form, and send it and payment along with a labeled photo of your pet to:

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Pet Photo Contest Mail-In Entry Form

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