



## Fiber Up Your Diet for a Healthful New Year!

January's cold weather and increase in illness calls for comforting foods that are nourishing and filling. Increasing fiber in our diet can help us feel full and is often found in nutrient dense foods. Fiber is a type of carbohydrate that is present in plants and cannot be digested by our bodies. It plays an important role in maintaining our health!

Eating enough fiber can have many benefits for our body, including:

**Digestive Wellness.** Fiber supports healthy digestion and regular bowel movements by creating bulk in your digestive tract, which can help manage constipation.

**Weight Management.** High-fiber foods tend to be more filling. It often takes longer to digest foods that are high in fiber, helping us feel full for longer. Many high-fiber foods provide lots of nutrients while having fewer calories.

**Blood Sugar Control.** Fiber-rich foods can help to reduce the blood sugar spike that can occur after eating carbohydrates by slowing down the absorption of food.

**Lowers Cholesterol Levels.** Fiber-rich foods like oats, beans, and flaxseeds may reduce cholesterol levels and are particularly heart-healthy.

Choosing more whole grains, produce, and legumes in your daily meals will help to boost your fiber intake. We provided some helpful tips on how to do that on page four!

## Food Safety Tip

Preparing a few batches of food in advance can help save time and money. It is important to refrigerate your leftover foods promptly.

Most leftovers are good for 3-4 days if they are in tightly closed containers and refrigerated. Leaving cooked foods for long periods at room temperature promotes bacteria growth and can cause foodborne illness.



If you need help with food, apply for SNAP today!

The Greater Boston Food Bank can help you apply for SNAP benefits.

Contact us to find out if you are eligible, want to apply, or want support on your existing case.

CALL: (617) 598 5022  
OR VISIT:  
[GBFB.org/SNAP](http://GBFB.org/SNAP)

# Black Bean Sliders



This recipe is packed with fiber and plant-based protein which makes a filling and delicious meal. Boost your veggie intake by adding a side salad to the black bean sliders. This can be a great lunch or dinner!

## Ingredients:

- 2 15-ounce cans black beans, low sodium drained and rinsed
- 2 carrots, diced
- 1/2 cup onion, diced
- 1/2 cup bread crumbs, plain
- 1 egg, slightly beaten
- 2 teaspoons chili powder
- 1/2 teaspoon black pepper
- 14 slider hamburger buns, slider sized

## Directions:

1. Place 1 1/2 cups black beans in a large bowl and mash well using a fork or potato masher.
2. Add the remaining black beans and other ingredients except buns to bowl and combine well.
3. Scoop 1/4 cup of mixture and form into a patty. Repeat until no more mixture remains.
4. Spray a large skillet with cooking spray and heat over medium heat. Cook patties, about 2-3 minutes each side, until browned.
5. Remove from heat, serve on bun, and enjoy.

*Makes 7 servings (2 sliders each)*

Nutrition Facts	
Black Bean Sliders	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 165	Calories from Fat 18
	% Daily Value*
Total Fat 2g	3%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Trans Fat 0g	
Polyunsaturated Fat 1g	
Monounsaturated Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 27mg	9%
Sodium 264mg	11%
Potassium 474mg	14%
Total Carbohydrates 29g	10%
Dietary Fiber 10g	40%
Sugars 2g	
Protein 10g	20%
Vitamin A	50%
Vitamin C	8%
Vitamin D	0%
Calcium	5%
Iron	17%

\* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2000 calorie diet.

## LOOKING FOR RECIPE INSPIRATION?

Check out Click 'N Cook®, our online recipe database at [clickncook.org](http://clickncook.org)



Plantains are a staple food in Africa and the Americas. It is a versatile and nutritious food that provides dishes with a unique flavor!

## What can you do with:

### Plantains



**Choosing:** The plantain should be firm without soft spots, with mostly yellow skin and some brown spots. Green plantains are unripe and starchy, while black plantains are very ripe and sweet.

**Storing:** Ripe plantains should be stored in a refrigerator for up to a week to extend the shelf life. The unripe plantains can be left at room temperature for several days. Plantains can also be kept frozen in a plastic wrap for two-three weeks.

**Preparing:** Cut the end of the plantain and peel it. It can be boiled, grilled, fried, and baked.

**Uses:** Plantains can be used in sweet and savory dishes. Popular dishes include plantain chips, mofongo (mashed plantains), plantain soups, tostones (fried plantains). Very ripe plantains are also used in sweets and desserts.

**Nutrition:** Plantains are a great source of carbohydrates and fiber, providing energy and improving digestion. They are rich in vitamins A and C, which help to protect and keep our cells healthy.

**Fun Fact:** Plantains are called “cooking bananas” because, unlike the bananas, they need to be cooked before eating.

**A CLICK N’ COOK RECIPE**  
MORE AT: [CLICKNCOOK.ORG](http://CLICKNCOOK.ORG)

## Tostones with Dipping Sauce



### Ingredients

- 3/4 cup cilantro, chopped, fresh
- 2 cloves garlic, chopped finely
- 1/4 cup white wine vinegar
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 tablespoons lime juice
- 3 large green plantains
- 1/2 cup vegetable oil for frying

### Directions

1. Combine the cilantro, garlic, vinegar, olive oil, and lime juice. Season with salt and pepper to taste and preserve.
2. To peel the plantains, cut off both ends of each plantain and discard. With tip of a knife, make 4 shallow cuts in the peel along entire length, taking care not to cut into the flesh. Peel skin in sections. Use knife to scrape off any pieces of remaining peel on plantain. Cut plantains into 3/4-inch-thick rounds.
3. In a deep skillet on medium-high, heat 1 inch oil until hot but not smoking. In batches, fry plantains, taking care not to overcrowd pan, about 2 min. on each side, until completely tender but not browned. With slotted spoon or tongs, transfer plantains to a paper towel-lined plate. Let cool slightly. Reserve oil in skillet.
4. Working with 1 plantain piece at a time, gently flatten with bottom of small pan, jar, mug, or plate. Repeat with remaining plantain rounds.
5. Re-heat the oil in skillet on medium-high until hot. In batches, fry plantains, taking care not to overcrowd the pan, about 2 min. on each side, until crisp. Transfer to a paper towel-lined plate. Immediately season with salt to taste and serve hot with the herb sauce.



## How to Fiber Up Your Diet

These are some simple tips on how you can add more fiber to your diet to reach the recommended intake of 25-30g per day:

**Start your day strong.** Add more fiber to your morning meal by choosing cereal or granola that has at least 5g of fiber per serving. You may add ½ cup of frozen berries or cut fruit for an additional 3-4g. Choosing oatmeal or overnight oats is a fiber-rich choice as well.

**Add more beans, peas, and lentils.** Both canned and dry provide a very high amount of fiber! Half a cup of prepared beans contains over 7g of fiber. Add beans or chickpeas to green salads. It is an excellent addition to soups. Refried black beans can be great with nachos. Make hummus or a bean dip!

**Choose your snacks wisely.** Snack on fruits and veggies; they are packed with nutrients, including fiber. Add veggie sticks of cucumber, celery, and carrot to your dips and hummus. Low-fat popped popcorn can be a great fiber-rich snack, too!

**Bake with whole-grain flour.** Swap to whole grain flour for your baked goods. While not every recipe allows to swap the refined white flour fully, you can do half and half or just one-third. It is all about those small changes!

**Add more veggies.** Mix up starchy root vegetables like potatoes and butternut squash in your stews and soups with non-starchy veggies like carrots, zucchini, and cabbage.

**Look for whole grains.** Choose whole-grain bread and pasta as much as possible. Look for 2-5g of fiber per serving on the nutrition facts label in these products.



### JANUARY 2024

National Oatmeal Month

National Slow Cooking Month

National Black-Eyed Pea Day

January 1

National Spaghetti Day

January 4

National Bean Day

January 6

National Curried Chicken Day

January 12

National Popcorn Day

January 19

National Peanut Butter Day

January 24

National Blueberry Pancake Day

January 28