

# Reducing Sodium in Canned Pulses

Canned pulses (lentils, beans and chickpeas) are nutritional powerhouses. They are high in fibre, low in fat and are a good source of protein. Eating pulses can lower blood cholesterol, help with weight management and blood sugar control.

People on low sodium diets are often told to avoid canned foods because of their high sodium content. Another option is to purchase reduced sodium food products, but these can often be difficult to find.

**Don't count pulses out because they are canned.** You can continue to get the great taste, convenience and nutritional benefits of canned pulses by following a common food preparation practice: draining and rinsing. This simple step reduces the sodium content of canned pulses by more than 40%.<sup>1</sup>

Reduce the sodium in your canned pulses in three easy steps:



- 1 Open a can of beans, pour the contents into a colander and drain for two minutes.



- 2 Rinse the beans under tap water for at least 10 seconds.



- 3 Allow beans to drain for two more minutes.

<sup>1</sup> Jones JB, Mount JR. Sodium Reduction in Canned Bean Varieties by Draining and Rinsing. 2009; Institute of Food Technologists Conference Poster. Anaheim, California.

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## Things to do with Canned Pulses

- 1 Add a handful of black beans to your usual pizza toppings.
- 2 Add 1 cup (250 mL) of whole or pureed chickpeas to your spaghetti sauce instead of ground beef. This lowers the fat and increases fibre.
- 3 Add ½ cup (125 mL) of lentils to quesadillas along with other fillings you enjoy.
- 4 Mix ½ cup (125 mL) black beans into 1 cup (250 mL) of your favourite salsa. Add some chopped cilantro and a squeeze of lime juice for an easy party dip.
- 5 Include 1 cup (250 mL) of chickpeas to any salad for a different twist.
- 6 Drain, rinse and purée 1 cup (250 mL) of canned lentils with your favourite herb and use as a sandwich spread.
- 7 Include ⅓ cup (75 mL) of cooked black, white or cranberry beans with an omelette to add protein and fibre.
- 8 Add ½ cup (125 mL) of cooked chickpeas to soups to increase protein by 7 grams.
- 9 Replace half the butter or oil when baking with a lentil purée to lower the fat.
- 10 Add 1 cup (250 mL) of beans to 3 cups (750 mL) of rice to make a tasty, complete protein.

For more information and tasty pulse recipes visit [www.pulsecanada.com](http://www.pulsecanada.com)



Black Bean Pizza



Chickpea-Pasta Salad



Cranberry Orange Muffins