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**Beneficial Bites:**

* Pumpkin is one of the richest food sources of vitamin A. Just a half-cup of canned pumpkin provides 381% of the daily value of vitamin A!
* Besides being fat-, sodium-, and cholesterol-free, pumpkin is also a great natural source of fiber and the antioxidant beta-carotene.
* Pumpkin is a good source of several other vitamins and minerals as well.

**Did you know?**

* Pumpkins are considered the world’s largest fruit. (That’s right—fruit!) They belong to the same family as squash, muskmelons, and watermelons.
* An important part of American history, pumpkin was a staple of the Native American and early settlers’ diets.
* October 26th is National Pumpkin Day.
* Pumpkins weren’t always the feature of the pie; in colonial times, they were part of the crust.
* Jack-o-lanterns evolved from an Irish myth about the ghostly spirit of Stingy Jack and other similarly shaped carved vegetables meant to ward off evil spirits.



**Food for thought:**

* Save those seeds! Roast them for a tasty snack high in protein, fiber, potassium, and omega-3. **Pumpkin Seeds**
1. Preheat oven to 300°
2. Spoon seeds and pulp out of pumpkin into a bowl
3. Remove pulp, rinse under water and shake dry
4. Spread in a single layer on an oiled baking sheet; roast for 30 minutes
5. Toss with olive oil, salt, and spices…
* Sweet: cinnamon and sugar
* Spanish: smoked paprika & slivered almonds
* Italian: grated parmesan & dried oregano
* Barbecue: brown sugar, chipotle chile powder, & ground cumin

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