**Warm the Heart as well as the Hearth with Barley**

Chilly weather brings warm cravings! So why not curl up with some whole grain barley stew that’s packed with nutrients sure to keep you satisfied and nourished this month! Barley is flavorful and an excellent source of manganese, vitamin B1, phosphorus and fiber! Barley can give you that intestinal boost you’ve been looking for by increasing the amount of “friendly” bacteria in the large intestine which helps maintain a healthy colon.

Other health benefits of barley include decreasing blood pressure and LDL “bad” cholesterol which can help reduce the risk of heart disease. Recent research also indicates barley’s ability to control blood sugar, which can help fight off diabetes. Barley also has more protein than corn, brown rice, millet, sorghum or rye, and is higher in fiber and lower in soluble carbohydrates than most grains.

Barley is an excellent breakfast choice to increase satiety and hold you over till lunch! Before cooking be sure to rinse thoroughly and use in various baked goods to increase flavor and nutrient value! Add to stews, soups or hot cereal for a hearty meal.

Copper is a mineral supplied by barley that can help decrease inflammation and provide flexibility of blood vessels, bones and joints. One cup of cooked barley provides 32.0% of the DV for copper!

Did you know that barley was used as a coffee substitute during the First and Second World Wars in Italy? Another interesting fact about barley includes being used as currency! One of the greatest producers of barley in the world is Russia, and it produces more than 16 metric tons each year!

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