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Did you Know...

In ancient civilizations including Egypt, Greece and Rome, barley was a staple crop. And up until roughly the 16th century, barley was the most important grain of Western Europe.

Barley was the model for the size of an inch. In 1324, King Edward II of England standardized the measurement as “three grains of barley, dry and round, placed end to end lengthwise.”

EAT WELL, AGE WELL. February- Barley

February is Whole Grain and American Heart Month. According to a 2022 report by American Health Rankings.org, ~20% or 1 in 5 adults aged 65 in WI have cardiovascular disease and ~60% have high blood pressure.

Cardiovascular disease refers to several conditions resulting from plaque building up in arteries, including coronary artery disease, chest pain, heart attacks, and strokes. **Heart disease was the leading cause of death in the United States in 2020.** Risk factors for cardiovascular disease include high blood pressure, high cholesterol, obesity, physical inactivity, unhealthy diet, diabetes, smoking, excessive alcohol consumption, high levels of stress, and a family history of heart disease or stroke.

Adding Barley and whole grains to your diet can help. Barley is cholesterol free, and rich in potassium, folate, iron, B vitamins, and other nutrients that support cardiovascular function.

The fiber in barley can help manage blood pressure and reduce cholesterol levels. Whole barley has a lower glycemic index, keeping your energy more constant and providing a sense of fullness over a longer period. It, along with other whole grains, is associated with heart healthfulness and is widely recommended for reducing the risk of heart disease and Type 2 diabetes. Barley is a delicious addition to soups, salads, baked goods, entrées, and more!

Beef Barley Soup For Two

In 30 minutes, you can enjoy this nourishing soup.

Ingredients

- 2 tablespoons each chopped carrot, celery, and onion
- 1 teaspoon vegetable oil
- 1 cup water
- 1 cup reduced-sodium beef broth
- 1/2 cup cubed cooked roast beef, hamburger or you can omit. You can also substitute with beans or whatever leftover meat you have.
- 1/2 cup canned diced tomatoes (look for reduced sodium versions)
- 1/4 cup quick-cooking barley
- 2 tablespoons frozen peas
- 1/4 teaspoon salt or salt-free herb blend
- 1/4 teaspoon dried basil
- 1/4 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper

Directions

- In a small saucepan, sauté the carrot, celery, and onion in oil until tender. Add the remaining ingredients; bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 15-20 minutes or until barley is tender, stirring occasionally.

Recipe adapted from <https://www.tasteofhome.com/recipes/beef-barley-soup-for-2/>

Check out more Barley Recipes at: <https://wholegrainscouncil.org/recipes>

How to Cook Barley: https://www.themediterraneanandish.com/wprm_print/47340

Read more about this history of barley, nutrition information, and more at <https://wholegrainscouncil.org/whole-grains-101/grain-month-calendar/barley-%E2%80%93-february-grain-month>

