



HALLOWEEN PUMPKIN FUN

The benefits...

Pumpkins are not only nutritious (high in vitamin C, low in carbohydrates and zero cholesterol), they provide fun activities to do with the kids at Halloween, and you can make delicious, easy-to-make recipes with the leftovers!

Here are some easy-to-do activities for autumn evenings at home.



PUMPKIN CARVING

Carving a pumpkin is easy and only takes a few basic tools; a thin bladed knife and a large spoon.



- Step 1** With the knife, cut into the top of the pumpkin in a circle around the stem. The hole should be large enough for you to scoop out the seeds and membrane by hand. As you cut out the top hole, angle the knife so the tip points into the centre of the circle, so that the lid will be slightly cone shaped. This will help prevent the lid from falling into the hole.
- Step 2** Now scrape out the seeds and membrane with the spoon, scraping as much of the soft fibres from the walls of the pumpkin as you can (without breaking through the walls).
- Step 3** With a pen or pencil, draw the parts of the face (or whatever shape you're carving) into one side of the pumpkin. Use your knife to carefully cut out the individual parts of the face. When you have finished, carefully push out the pieces to see the final results.
- Step 4** Put a tea light candle in the bottom of the pumpkin and carefully place the lid back.

Safety... An adult should do the cutting for young children.





PUMPKIN PIE RECIPE



You will need...

For the pastry, sweet short crust ready-made pastry case (or a packet of ready-made sweet short crust pastry to line a pie tin.)

For the filling

450 g/1lb prepared weight pumpkin flesh, cut into 1in/2.5 cm chunks

2 large eggs plus 1 yolk

3 oz/75g soft dark brown sugar

1 tsp ground cinnamon

level teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg

tsp ground allspice

tsp ground cloves

tsp ground ginger

0 fl oz/275 ml double cream



Preparation method

- Step 1** Pre-heat the oven to 180C/350F/Gas 4.
- Step 2** Use a shop bought sweet crust pastry case, about 9 inch/23 cm diameter and 1 1/2 inches 4 cm deep (or line a pie tin of the same measurements with ready-made pastry)
- Step 3** To make the filling, steam the pumpkin then place in a coarse sieve and press lightly to extract any excess water.
- Step 4** Then lightly whisk the eggs and extra yolk together in a large bowl.
- Step 5** Place the sugar, spices and the cream in a pan, bring to simmering point, giving it a whisk to mix everything together. Then pour it over the eggs and whisk it again briefly.
- Step 6** Now add the pumpkin puree, still whisking to combine everything thoroughly.
- Step 7** Then pour the filling into your pastry case and bake for 35-40 minutes, by which time it will puff up round the edges but still feel slightly wobbly in the centre.
- Step 8** Then remove it from the oven and place the tin on a wire cooling rack. Serve chilled (stored loosely covered in foil in the fridge) with some equally chilled cream or ice-cream, but warm or at room temperature would be fine.

Safety... An adult should supervise young children and operate cooking equipment.



To learn more about how you can get more active with your kids, go to the 'Live Well' section at www.nhs.uk, where you can:

- Get top tips on fun activities to do together
- Read about the risks of obesity
- Find local services to get you started



PUMPKIN SOUP - SERVES 6



You will need...

Ingredients

- 1 lb 8 oz (700 g) pumpkin or butternut squash, deseeded and chopped into 1 inch (2.5 cm) dice
- 1 tablespoon of oil
- 1 medium onion, peeled and finely chopped
- 10 fl oz (275 ml) whole milk
- 1 1/4 pints (725 ml) stock made a stock cube
- salt and black pepper

Method

- Step 1** Begin by melting the butter in the saucepan, then add the onion and soften it for about 8 minutes. After that add the chopped pumpkin (or butternut squash), then give everything a good stir and season with salt and pepper.
- Step 2** Put the lid on and, keeping the heat low, allow the vegetables to sweat gently and release their juices - this should take about 10 minutes. Next, pour in the milk and stock and simmer gently for about 20 minutes. Put the lid on for this but leave a little gap (so it's not quite on) because, with the presence of the milk, it could boil over. Keep a close eye on it anyway.
- Step 3** When the soup is ready, pour it into a food processor or blender and blend it to a puree, leaving a little bit of texture - it doesn't need to be absolutely smooth. You will probably need to do this in 2 batches. If you don't have a blender then just leave the soup as it is. Serve the soup in warm bowls.

Safety... An adult should supervise young children and operate cooking equipment and machinery.

