

your



... It's Worth the Trip!



THINKING OUTSIDE THE BOX

Pumpkin Waffles and Chicken Dinner (Oh Yeah!)

We have all heard that eating plenty of fruits and vegetables may help control your weight and lower your risk for heart disease as well as other chronic diseases. We are even encouraged to fill our plate with ½ fruits and vegetables. Experts recommend, that ideally, Americans should aim for at least 8 servings of fruits and vegetables per day. You may have even heard we should aim to vary the colors of our produce and “eat the rainbow.” The guidance to vary produce is just as important as guidance on the number of servings. Each color of produce provides the body with different key vitamins, minerals, and many other beneficial compounds; some of which we are still discovering and can’t create in a lab or a factory. This is why taking over-the-counter daily vitamin and mineral supplements are not a substitution for a diet rich in a variety of produce.

[MyPlate](#), the current food guidance system to assist Americans in building a healthy eating pattern, breaks vegetables into 5 subgroups: dark green, red and orange, beans and peas, starch, and other. A [recommended weekly intake](#) is suggested from each group. These recommendations are given as amounts to eat WEEKLY. It is not necessary to eat vegetables from each subgroup daily. However, over a week, Americans are encouraged to consume the advised amounts from each subgroup.

The red and orange vegetables are full of essential nutrients like beta-carotene, which is a key antioxidant that helps to keep the immune system strong and assists in protecting against heart disease. Most red and orange vegetables are nearly fat-free and low in protein, with about 1 to 2 grams per serving. The recommended weekly intake is 5 1/2 cups for adult women and 6 cups for adult men. Click the link to view details of what counts as a serving. <https://www.choosemyplate.gov/vegetables>

This meal takes a Southern favorite, Chicken and Waffles, to a new level by adding pureed pumpkin into the mix to amplify the nutritional quality and topping it with an orange fruit to help you meet the weekly recommendation.

Ingredients

Chicken:

- 1 lb. boneless chicken tenders
- 2 cups bread crumbs or panko
- OPTIONAL: 1 tsp. onion powder
- 1 egg plus 2 egg whites
- ½ cup whole wheat flour
- ¾ tsp. garlic powder
- ¼ tsp. pepper
- ¼ tsp. paprika
- 3 tbsp. Parmesan Cheese
- ¼ cup skim milk
- ¼ cup canola oil

Waffles:

- 2 ½ cups pancake mix (whole wheat, preferable)
- ½ cup plus 2 tbsp. canned pumpkin puree (not pumpkin pie mix or filling)
- 2 14.5 oz. cans of sliced peaches (no sugar added)
- ¼ cup walnuts (chopped)
- 3 dashes of nutmeg
- 1 ¼ cups skim milk
- 2 eggs
- ¼ cup canola oil
- ¼ tsp. cinnamon
- 2 tbsp. brown sugar
- 3 dashes of nutmeg

Directions

- 1) Lightly salt 1 lb. of boneless, raw chicken tenders and then coat with flour. Dip the coated tenders in the egg mixture and then place in the bag of spices. Seal the bag and then shake to coat the tenders.
- 2) Begin heating a waffle iron. Meanwhile, in a large bowl pour in, pancake mix with skim milk, canned pumpkin puree, eggs, canola oil, cinnamon, nutmeg, chopped walnuts and brown sugar. Mix with a wire whisk until the ingredients are blended.
- 3) Lightly coat a waffle iron with cooking spray. Pour the batter into the center of the iron and close the lid. Continue cooking for about 5 minutes or until steam no longer is coming out of the iron. Remove the waffle and repeat until the batter is used up.
- 4) While the waffles are cooking, begin cooking the chicken tenders. In a large skillet, heat canola oil over medium heat. Add the tenders and cook 2-3 minutes on each side or until a meat thermometer reads 165 degrees F. Drain the tenders on a paper towel to absorb excess oil.
- 5) To serve, place 2 waffles on each plate, top with ½ cup of drain unsweetened canned peaches, and ¼ of the chicken strips. Sprinkle with a little extra walnuts, if desired.

Notes: Use the leftover pumpkin and peaches by serving in a bowl, topped with nonfat vanilla Greek yogurt, sprinkled with raisins.

DISCLAIMER: YOU MAY USE ANY LIKE PRODUCTS OF ANY BRAND IN MAKING THIS HEALTHY CHOICE MEAL. THE PICTURES HERE ARE NOT AN ENDORSEMENT OF THESE PRODUCTS.

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