PEAS

Health Benefits:

Peas help control blood sugar levels and help reduce blood clotting. Peas are a fair source of vitamin A, B and C, and are a good source of iron and potassium. Peas are also high in protein, “good” carbohydrates, and fiber. Peas fall within the Legume family and it is recommended that you eat about 3 cps per week as they are great dietary health boosters.

Preparation:

Wash peas before using.

Shell Peas: snap off both ends and pull the “tread like” piece that runs down the middle of the pod. Open the pod and remove the peas. Add shell peas to stews, soups, sautés, or stir-fries, or pasta, potato, and rice salads.

Snap Peas: snap off both ends and remove the string if it naturally stays attached to the ends. These do not have to be split down the middle. Eat raw with dips or in salads, or cook till they turn a bright green color (overcooking will deplete nutrient content).

Snow Peas: You may snap off the ends if you choose, generally these peas are less tough and will not have string running down the middle of the pod. They have a sweet, crisp flavor and texture and are great for stir-fries.

Storage:

Peas should be washed and eaten as soon as possible. Store in an air tight container or bag in the fridge, they will keep for about a week. Peas can also be blanched and frozen and will keep well for between six months to one year.

Recipes:

Fresh Pea Pod, Broccoli, and Rice Salad

 6 oz long-grain and wild rice mix

 1 1/2 cps chopped broccoli

 1/3 cp sliced onion

 1/4 cp bottled Italian salad dressing

 1 tbsp lemon juice

 1/2 tsp lemon pepper

 1 1/2 cps edible pea pods

 1/2 cp halved cherry tomatoes

 1/3 cp slivered almonds, pine nuts, or sunflower seeds

1. Prepare rice mix according to package directions.

2. Steam broccoli and peas until crunchy but tender.

3. Toss with remaining ingredients and refrigerate 2-24 hours. Makes 4 servings.

Peas, Asparagus, and Cheesy Pasta

 6 oz short pasta (rotini, ziti, bowtie, etc.)

 1 cp chopped asparagus (1in. long pieces)

 1/3 cp chopped onion

 1 clove chopped garlic

 1 cp of various pea pods (cut in half)

 1/4 cp feta cheese

 1/4 cp parmesan cheese

 1/4 cp milk

 1/2 cp sliced mushrooms

 2 tbsp oil

 Salt and pepper to taste

 1/2 tsp chili pepper flakes

 2 tsp red or white wine vinegar

1. Prepare the pasta according to package directions

2. Sautee onion, garlic, chili pepper flakes, and mushrooms in the oil, until wilted

3. Steam the asparagus and peas until crunchy but tender and add to the onion, garlic, and mushroom mix.

4. In a pan over medium-high, heat the cheese, milk, and vinegar until they have blended into an even sauce, pour over the asparagus and peas. Toss in the pasta.