

Pulses prove to be a recipe for heart-healthy success

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University of Saskatchewan (USask) researchers Phil Chilibeck and Gord Zello have used a \$10,000 award from the Saskatchewan Health Research Foundation's (SHRF) Research Connections: COVID-19 Rapid Response program, to fine-tune and publish online a unique collection of clinically proven recipes that use lentils, chickpeas, beans and peas.

"We've been doing research with pulses for at least 15 years, and it was always our intention to get a book out to the public so that other people could benefit as well," said Chilibeck, professor in the College of Kinesiology.

SHRF's rapid response call for COVID-related projects was timely, providing the resources they needed to move ahead with the work required to publish the recipes online, he said.

"Pulses are perfect food for people during times of decreased activity, such as during a pandemic," he said. "These foods are extremely beneficial in reducing [risk factors](#) for [cardiovascular disease](#), diabetes, hypertension and obesity—conditions that put people at greater risk because they can lead to complications if they get COVID."

Among other benefits of pulses is their low cost of adding protein to the diet, long shelf life, and ease of cooking, making them ideal to take along on such things as camping trips. The ability to store pulses for a long time also means people could require fewer trips to a grocer, also a plus in a pandemic.

Chilibeck said former Ph.D. student Maryam Kazemi initially put together the recipes, and several students, including Leandy Bertrand, now a post-doctoral fellow, also contributed. Chilibeck and nutrition

professor Zello spent time over the past year fine-tuning the recipes by experimenting with the spices to make the recipes as tasty as possible.

The researchers also worked with the Food Development Centre in Saskatoon to create pre-packaged meals based on some of the recipes. These are currently undergoing trials, with the aim selling them to the public.

So, what is Chilibeck's favorite among the recipes? He's partial to one that has lentils with bulgur wheat and caramelized onions, which he admits doesn't jump off the page based on the ingredients but is downright delicious. For ease of cooking, he goes with the Memories of Mumbai chana masala. With 50 recipes to choose from, there are plenty of choices.

The group is called EPIC Health (Eating Pulses Improves Cardiometabolic Health), and the recipes are found on the website: <https://epicallyhealthy.wixsite.com/epichealth>. The website provides links to an Instagram page and YouTube channel that are works in progress, and provide the basics for cooking pulses and a few videos on making some [pulse](#)-based meals.

More information: epicallyhealthy.wixsite.com/epichealth

Provided by University of Saskatchewan

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