

Easiest Ever Lentil Sloppy Joes

Is this the healthiest recipe ever? No, it is not. Why? Barbeque sauce is high in sugar and salt. Why are we making it for a *healthy* cooking class? Because it's easy, inexpensive, and **nutritious**. The recipe takes 30 minutes, costs about \$1.50 for 4 sandwiches, and is packed with fiber, protein, iron, and folate (important for a baby's growing brain and blood supply). Barbequed beef is higher in iron, and probably yummier.....but beef costs a lot more than lentils. Try this recipe when your budget is tight!

Set aside plain cooked lentils for babies less than one year to avoid giving babies added sugar or salt.

Makes 4 lentil sandwiches (you can easily double the lentils to fill all 8 buns that come in a package)

Takes 35 minutes (mostly hands-off time)

Ingredients:

½ cup lentils (\$0.22)

½ cup barbeque sauce (\$0.89)

4 buns or 8 slices of bread (toasted) (\$0.69)

Instructions:

1. Put lentils in a bowl, pour in 3 cups water, and soak for 8 to 24 hours. **Want lentils now?** It's okay to skip the soak. **Why soak?** Soaking lentils before cooking makes them easier to digest (less gas and bloating) and improves the absorption of vitamins and minerals.
2. Drain soaking water and rinse lentils. If you did not soak the lentils, simply rinse them under cold water.
3. Pour lentils and 4 cups of water into a pot. Turn the heat to high. Boil over medium-high heat until lentils are cooked, about 30 minutes. Keep the lid on unless it causes the lentils to boil over, then leave it off (this will depend on the shape and size of your pot). Taste lentils at 30 minutes. If they are soft, they are done. If the lentils are still crunchy, keep cooking them until they are soft (10-15 more minutes). Don't let the pot run out of water, add more water before it dries out.
4. Once the lentils are cooked, drain off any extra water (there might not be any). Stir in ½ cup barbeque sauce. Place ¼ cup lentils on a toasted bun and serve hot. Barbeque lentils are also good on top of rice.

Nutrition in ¼ cup lentils + 2 Tablespoons barbeque sauce: 88 Calories, 2.5 grams protein (kids aged 1-3 only need 13g per day), 2 grams fiber (Kids aged 1-3 need 19g/day), 12% a child's iron needs for the day, 30% a child's folate needs for the day and about 10% Magnesium, Phosphorus, Zinc, Manganese, Thiamin, Pantothenic Acid and B6 needs for the day! + about 5% Niacin, Riboflavin, Selenium and Vitamin A needs for the day. I bet you didn't know all these nutrients existed!

