

~PROTEIN-PACKED~

**CHOCOLATE LUNCHBOX CHEWIES****\*AKA: "BROWNIES' HEALTHY COUSIN" MAKES 18 - 24 BARS**

Keeping your ingredients nut-free by using nut-butter alternatives and checking your oatmeal and pudding packets etc. to be sure everything is free of peanuts, helps to keep these healthy, filling and DELICIOUS snacks lunchbox-friendly! But don't stop at the lunchbox; these high-fibre, high-protein chewies are a terrific snack any time of the day! ...And, no, you can't taste the beans!



## Ingredients:

- 1 tin (approx. 540 ml) black beans/chickpeas/other bean of choice - preferably salt-free but not necessary (avoid lentils as they impart a bit of an earthy flavour in this recipe), rinsed and drained
- 1/2 cup pancake syrup OR honey OR 1/2 cup white or brown sugar mixed with 1/4 cup water
- 3/4 cup alternative nut-butter spread such as Wow-Butter (regular peanut butter is fine, just keep in mind that the chewies won't be lunchbox-friendly)
- 4 individual serving-sized packets of any flavoured/plain instant oatmeal OR 1 cup oats
- 1/4 cup oil OR melted butter/margarine OR applesauce (plus more margarine for greasing pan)
- 1 box (approx. 113 g) chocolate (or try butterscotch!) instant pudding powder OR 3/4 cup instant hot chocolate powder
- 1/4 cup pancake/biscuit mix, any type OR flour

## Directions:

- Preheat oven to 350 degrees and lightly grease or line with parchment paper a square 8 x 8 inch pan/casserole dish
- In a large bowl, using a potato masher, mash beans to as close to a paste as you can get it (a few chunks are fine)
- Add syrup and continue mashing until as smooth as possible
- Using a wooden spoon, mix in in Wow-butter and oil until well incorporated
- Mix in pancake mix, pudding powder and oats and combine well (depending on the combination of ingredients you used, the batter could be quite stiff - don't worry; it will yield great results, so have no fear!).
- Spoon mixture evenly into prepared pan (if really thick, press it into pan evenly) and bake in preheated oven about 20-30 minutes (drier batter generally takes about 20 minutes, wet batter will take longer. Ready once middle is set). Let cool 1 hour, carefully cut into desired sized bars (they will be soft, tender and chewy) and store, well-wrapped, either in the fridge for 1 week or in the freezer for up to 1 month.