

Zesty Ginger Turmeric Carrot Cake

This deliciously dense, moist carrot cake is packed with nutrients (and flavor)! It showcases turmeric root, which has anti-inflammatory and anti-cancer properties. Unlike most other cakes, it packs in fiber, vitamins, minerals and some omega 3 fats from the vegetables, fruits, nuts and seeds it contains. Ginger root and lemon zest add a refreshing twist that balances its warm spices, cinnamon and nutmeg.

Total time: 1 hour 30 minutes

Yield: one 9"x1.5" cake (12 servings)

Ingredients:

For carrot cake:

2 cups all-purpose flour
2 teaspoons baking soda
2 teaspoons baking powder
2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
½ teaspoon ground nutmeg
½ teaspoon salt
1 ½ cup pitted dates, packed
½ cup + 3 tablespoons water, divided
2 tablespoons ground flax seed
2 large eggs
¾ cup avocado or olive oil
½ cup unsweetened applesauce
2 teaspoons vanilla
3 cups carrot, grated
¼ cup fresh ginger root, finely grated
2 tablespoons fresh turmeric root, finely grated

For frosting:

8 ounces full fat cream cheese, chilled
¼ cup butter, at room temperature
¼ cup honey
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1 teaspoon lemon zest (from ~1 fresh lemon)
¼ cup finely chopped walnuts (optional)

Instructions:

1. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit.
2. Grease a 9" cake pan and set aside.
3. In a large bowl, whisk flour, baking soda, baking powder, cinnamon, nutmeg and salt until combined.
4. Place ½ cup water and dates in a blender and puree until smooth (you will still see pieces of the fruit skin).



5. In a small bowl, combine ground flax seed and 3 tablespoons of water. Let sit 1-2 minutes until it thickens.
6. In a medium bowl, combine eggs, oil, applesauce and vanilla. Add date mixture and flax seed mixture.
7. Add wet mixture to dry mixture and stir to combine.
8. Fold in carrots, ginger and turmeric.
9. Pour into greased pan and place in oven. Bake for ~1 hour, or until a toothpick inserted comes out clean.
10. While cake is baking, prepare the frosting. Whip cream cheese until soft (about 2-3 minutes). Add butter and blend.
11. Add honey, vanilla and zest. Whip until smooth and creamy (about 5 minutes).
12. Spread frosting on cake. Garnish with chopped walnuts, if desired.

Provides 415 calories, 6 grams protein, 4 grams fiber per serving

Nutrition Tips:

- Turmeric root stains! Wear gloves (preferably latex-free for those allergic to latex) to protect your hands from staining yellow. Be mindful of your cooking utensils that will come in contact with it as well; stainless steel is an excellent option. Also, an easy way to peel turmeric root is to scrape it off with a spoon (you can use the same technique with ginger!). Fun fact: turmeric turns red after baking!
- Ginger and lemon can help to reduce nausea symptoms. This recipe uses both! Consider adding some lemon juice to the frosting after whipping for extra tanginess.
- Eating enough calories and protein is important during treatment to preserve your muscles and prevent weight loss.
 - To increase calories, substitute ½ cup oil in place of the applesauce.
 - To boost protein, consider substituting the flax seeds with 2 additional eggs. Please note that this will decrease the omega 3 fatty acids and fiber content slightly.
- Adequate fiber intake is helpful for keeping your bowels regular. To increase the fiber content, substitute up to 50% of the all-purpose flour with whole wheat. You can also substitute the eggs with ¼ cup ground flax seed mixed into 5-6 tablespoons of water. Keep in mind; you're already getting lots of fiber from the carrots, ginger root, turmeric root, dates, applesauce and 2 tablespoons flax seed.

Recipe provided by Josann Nichols, MGH Dietetic Intern 2017