UCI Health

Grain and egg muffins with spinach, feta and sun-dried tomato

Ingredients

- 1½ cups cooked grain, cooled
  Good options: quinoa, brown rice, farro, barley, or millet
- 8 large eggs
- 2 cups spinach, wilted, squeezed dry, chopped
- ½ cup oil-packed sun-dried tomatoes, drained, chopped
- ½ cup crumbled feta or cheese of choice
- 3 scallions, sliced
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon black pepper
- Olive or avocado oil, or use a silicone muffin liner for each cup

Nutritional information

Total cost: $6.50/$1.10 per serving
Serves: 6 (2 muffins per serving)
Calories: 210 per serving

Directions

- Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
- Grease 12-cup muffin tin with oil, coating bottom and sides, or use silicone liners and brush lightly with oil.
- Wilt raw spinach in a dry pan or microwave for about a minute. Let cool, then squeeze out as much water as possible with your hands or a towel, then chop. Thawed frozen spinach also works but must be squeezed dry. Too much moisture makes muffins soggy.
- In a bowl, mix cooked grain, spinach, sun-dried tomatoes, feta, scallions and garlic. Break up any clumps of grain so everything mixes evenly.
- In separate bowl, beat eggs with salt and pepper.
- Spoon grain and vegetable mixture evenly into muffin cups.
- Stir eggs again, then pour over each cup until almost full. Poke each cup once or twice with a fork to let egg mixture seep through filling.
- Bake for 20–25 minutes, until the muffins are puffed up and set in the center.
- Cool in pan for 5 minutes.
- Loosen muffin edges with butter knife then lift out.
- Enjoy warm or at room temperature.
- For a complete meal, pair muffins with fruit and a spoonful of yogurt for breakfast or serve with a green salad for lunch.

Recipe and photo by Jessica VanRoo, executive chef of the Susan Samueli Integrative Health Institute, part of UCI Health.

Tips:

- Think of this recipe as a formula and let the leftovers in your fridge decide the rest. The same egg-and-grain method carries almost any well-drained, cooked vegetable and cheese (i.e., broccoli and cheddar, mushroom and herb, roasted pepper and scallion.)
- Use dry vegetables. Spinach and other watery veggies will release liquid as they bake, making muffins soggy. Make sure to wilt and squeeze greens, drain sun-dried tomatoes, and avoid raw fresh tomato, which has too much water.
- Most egg muffin recipes use a bit of flour to help with texture, but cooked grain does the trick and keeps them gluten-free. If you want to use riced cauliflower to cut carbs, cook and drain it first. Muffins will turn out softer and more delicate because you lose the binding from the grain.
- Be generous when greasing pan or use silicone. A well-oiled nonstick tin or silicone liners will make cleanup much easier. Eggs will stick to paper liners.
- Both feta and sun-dried tomatoes are salty, so the recipe only calls for a small amount. For less sodium, rinse feta quickly and use a bit less.
- If you take a blood thinner like warfarin, remember that spinach and scallions have a lot of vitamin K. You don't have to avoid them, but try to keep your weekly intake steady. Check with your healthcare team to see what's best for you.
- To make these dairy-free, leave out the feta. Add a bit more sun-dried tomato and a pinch more salt for flavor, or use a spoonful of nutritional yeast.
- Kids can help by crumbling the feta, cutting the scallions and spooning the filling into the cups.

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