Hummus is a popular Middle Eastern dip made of chickpeas (garbanzo beans), olive oil, lemon juice, garlic and salt. It is a delicious and nutritious choice as a dip for vegetables or chips or on a sandwich in place of cream cheese or mayonnaise.

Here are other reasons to try hummus:

- Chickpeas are rich in protein, which can help fight hunger cravings and curb snacking.
- Hummus is high in fiber, which may help lower cholesterol.
- Chickpeas are a good source of folate, which is important for pregnant and nursing women.
- Olive oil is a monounsaturated fat that can help reduce bad cholesterol levels in your blood and lower your risk of heart disease and stroke.

**Basic Hummus**

1 15-ounce can chickpeas, drained, liquid reserved
1 clove garlic, minced
1 teaspoon lemon juice
½ teaspoon salt
1 tablespoon olive oil

In a blender or food processor combine garbanzo beans, garlic, salt and olive oil. Blend on low speed, gradually adding reserved bean liquid, until desired consistency is achieved.

Feeling adventurous? Replace part or all of the chickpeas with other kinds of cooked or canned beans, or try some of these tasty additions or create your own:

- pitted olives
- roasted bell peppers
- hot peppers
- minced herbs
- cooked carrots

To find out if you are eligible for free nutrition education, call UAF Cooperative Extension Service at 907-474-7930 or visit www.uaf.edu/ces/hhfd/fnp.

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The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) provides nutrition assistance to people with low income. It can help you buy nutritious foods for a better diet. To find out more, contact 907-465-3347. UAF is an AA/EO employer and educational institution.