Pear, Walnut and Maple Oat Bowls

2 breakfast bowls, each with half the cooked pear-oat mixture and 10 g (about 0.35 oz) walnuts | Active 10 min | Cook 13 min | Total 25 min

Ingredients

- 160 g (about 5.6 oz) ripe but firm pear, cored and cut into 1 cm (about 3/8 in) pieces, skin left on
- 100 ml (about 6 US tbsp plus 2 US tsp) water, divided: 30 ml (about 2 US tbsp) for the pear and 70 ml (about 1/4 US cup plus 2 US tsp) for the oats
- 80 g (about 2.8 oz) old-fashioned rolled oats, not steel-cut oats
- 350 ml (about 1 1/2 US cups) milk
- 10 g (about 0.35 oz) pure maple syrup
- 0.8 g ground cinnamon, about 1/4 tsp
- 0.5 g fine salt, a small pinch
- 20 g (about 0.71 oz) chopped walnuts

Set out

1000 W microwave with turntable, Microwave-safe bowl, 2 L (about 2.1 US qt) measured capacity, about 19 cm (about 7 1/2 in) inside diameter and 10 cm (about 4 in) deep, Microwave-safe vented cover for the pear stage, Knife and board, Spoon, Measuring jug and kitchen scale, Oven mitts, Two serving bowls

Allergens

Milk, Walnuts. Check labels and substitutions.

Make it

1. Put the pear and 30 ml (about 2 US tbsp) of the water in the 2 L (about 2.1 US qt) bowl. Cover with the vented cover. Microwave at 1000 W full power for 2 minutes, stir, then cook 1 minute more, until the pear is beginning to soften. Lift the cover away from your face.

2. Stir in the remaining 70 ml (about 1/4 US cup plus 2 US tsp) water, oats, milk, maple syrup, cinnamon and salt. Microwave uncovered at full power for 2 minutes. Stir thoroughly, scraping the bottom and edges.

3. Reduce to 50% power. Cook for 6-8 minutes, stopping to stir every 2 minutes, until the oats are soft and the mixture has gently bubbled and thickened. Watch the first cycle; pause sooner if the milk rises. If the oats are still firm, continue in 30-second bursts at 50% power, stirring between bursts.

4. Leave the bowl to stand for 2 minutes. Stir and divide all the porridge and pear between two serving bowls. Scatter 10 g (about 0.35 oz) walnuts over each and serve.

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A useful first check

The pear should soften before the oats are added. A large hard chunk cannot be corrected simply by letting finished porridge sit.

One oven, two bowls

Cook the full batch in the roomy bowl, then portion it. Two narrow mugs heat differently and are not equivalent to this method.

Ingredient labels

Oats may have gluten cross-contact; use certified gluten-free oats if needed. The soy-drink variation contains soy.

A useful detail

The 25-minute planning total allows fruit preparation, up to 13 minutes of sequential microwave heating, stirring, the 2-minute stand and serving. Times are starting ranges for a 1000 W microwave. Use the stated power setting, stir and turn as directed, and use the food endpoint rather than the clock alone. A different wattage or bowl shape may need additional short bursts.

Another way

Replace the pear with 160 g (about 5.6 oz) peeled apple cut into 5 mm (about 3/16 in) pieces; give it 3-4 minutes in the first covered stage and allow an extra minute overall if it is still firm.

Use 350 ml (about 1 1/2 US cups) unsweetened soy drink in place of milk and 20 g (about 0.71 oz) pumpkin seeds in place of walnuts. Soy becomes an allergen; the porridge may thicken differently, so use the same soft-oat endpoint.

Keep it well

Refrigerate leftover porridge in shallow portions within 2 hours, or 1 hour above 90°F/32°C, at 40°F/4°C or below; use within 3 days. Keep walnuts dry separately. Add 15 ml (about 1 US tbsp) water per portion, cover loosely and reheat in short bursts, stirring, until 165°F/74°C throughout; stand 2 minutes before eating.