Luscious Beet Salad with Toasted Pumpkin Seeds

I love this salad because it uses the whole beet and it adds beautiful color and a bounty of vitamins to a simple grain-bean meal. The pumpkin seeds puff up and smell magnificent when toasted.

Prep Time: 15 to 20 minutes
Cooking Time: 1 hour

Salad:
4 large beets
1/4 cup pumpkin seeds (these are green in color and found in the bulk foods section)
1 bunch beet greens
2-3 cups arugula leaves, washed and torn into bite-sized pieces
2 scallions, finely chopped
1/4 pound feta cheese (optional)

Dressing:
3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
3/4 teaspoon Dijon mustard
1/4 teaspoon freshly ground pepper
1 tablespoon finely chopped fresh basil

1. Wash beets and remove tops. Place beets in a large pot filled with water and bring to a boil. Lower heat and simmer until beets are tender (about an hour), or pressure-cook the beets in 1 inch of water for 30 minutes. Set aside to cool.

2. Toast pumpkin seeds by placing in a dry skillet over medium heat. Move the skillet back and forth over the heat with one hand; stir the seeds using a wooden spoon with the other hand. This toasts the seeds evenly and prevents burning. When seeds begin to pop and give off a nutty aroma, they are ready. Remove seeds from skillet and set aside.

3. To prepare beet greens, bring a large pot of water to a boil. Wash beet greens by submerging the bunch in a sink full of cold water. Shake off water and chop the bunch into bite-sized pieces. Drop greens into boiling water and let cook for about 30 seconds, just enough to make the stems tender. Place greens in a colander and run cold water over them to halt cooking.

4. Place all dressing ingredients in a jar and shake well. Peel beets and cut into small cubes. Squeeze excess water out of the cooked beet greens. Put cubed beets, beet...
greens, pumpkin seeds, arugula and scallions in a salad bowl. Pour dressing over salad and toss gently. Crumble feta cheese on top. Serve at room temperature or chilled.

**Nutritional Information**

Makes 6 servings

Per Serving:
Calories: 153
Fat: 12g
% fat calories: 65
Cholesterol: 17mg
Carbohydrate: 8g
Protein: 6g