



Friday Facts

October 4, 2024

Health Benefits of Apples

Eating apples regularly can contribute to various aspects of health. Some of the most notable benefits include:

Heart Health: Studies have shown that people who eat apples may have a lower risk of heart disease. The fiber in apples helps reduce cholesterol levels, and the flavonoids in the skin of the apple have been linked to a reduced risk of stroke.

Weight Management: Because apples are high in fiber and water, they promote a feeling of fullness, which may help prevent overeating. Their low-calorie content also makes them a guilt-free snack option.

Gut Health: The fiber in apples acts as a prebiotic, feeding the beneficial bacteria in your gut. A healthy gut microbiome is crucial for digestion, immune function, and even mental health.

Blood Sugar Control: The polyphenols in apples may help regulate blood sugar levels, making them a good choice for people with type 2 diabetes or those trying to manage their blood sugar.

Brain Health: Research suggests that the antioxidants in apples, especially quercetin, may help protect brain cells from oxidative stress, potentially lowering the risk of neurodegenerative diseases like Alzheimer's.

Cancer Prevention: Antioxidants in apples may offer beneficial effects against certain types of cancers, including lung, breast, and digestive tract cancers. These effects may be attributed to apple polyphenols keeping cancerous cells from multiplying.

Fight Asthma: The antioxidants in apple skin can help regulate your immune system and reduce inflammation, including airway inflammation related to asthma.

Eating an apple a day may not keep you out of a doctor's office forever, but it could sure give your system a fighting chance at staying healthy!



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Friday Facts

October 11, 2024

Healthy Apple Snacks

Looking for some easy yet tasty snacks that are fairly healthy? Wash 2 apples (e.g., Honeycrisp, Galas, or Fuji) and cut into slices, removing the core. Pop the apple slices into a Ziploc bag and sprinkle 1 tsp of ground cinnamon and 1/2 tsp of coconut sugar (optional) on top. Zip the bag and give it a good shake to coat the apple slices.

You can pair these with a nut butter or chop up the slices further for a parfait with Greek yogurt and granola.

Or you could try these [Apple Pie Energy Bites](#), from [NataliesHealth.com!](#)

Ingredients

- 1 cup apple chips (dried apples)
- 12 Medjool dates
- 1/4 cup rolled oats
- 1/2 cup almonds
- 1/2 cup walnuts
- 1 tablespoon ground flax seeds
- 1 teaspoon Ceylon cinnamon
- 1/4 teaspoon allspice

Directions

1. Start with preparing and measuring all the ingredients using measuring cups.
2. Put the dates in a small bowl and soak in hot water for a few minutes until they soften.
3. Take a high-speed food processor and put in all ingredients. Note: add soaked dates first for easier mixing.

4. Mix everything at high speed for a few minutes until the dough is formed.
5. Stop the mixing and check the texture by pinching the dough between your fingers. It should be sticky and able to keep its shape.
6. If the mixture is too dry, add a bit of reserved date water - just a teaspoon.
7. Using a spoon, scoop out the dough and roll it between your palms to form a little ball. Repeat with remaining dough.
8. For an extra treat, give them a dusting of cinnamon and coconut sugar (optional).
9. Place balls on a plate, serving tray, or in an airtight container and refrigerate to harden.



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Friday Facts

October 18, 2024

As Good as Pie?

My niece and I were enjoying a new Netflix show called "Blue Ribbon Baking Championship." The challenge in one episode had contestants use apples as the main ingredient, but they weren't allowed to make an apple pie. My niece thought of doing a cobbler, and I thought about (and drooled a little over) my friend's mom's caramel apple bars.

The author of food blog [A Clean Bake](#) swears this grain-free granola recipe is a pretty good substitute for apple pie. Who wants to test the recipe and report back?

BEST@REALiving.com

Apple Pie Granola

Ingredients

- 1 cup walnuts (raw, unsalted)
- 1 cup almonds (raw, unsalted)
- 1/2 cup sunflower seeds (raw, unsalted)
- 1 cup unsweetened shredded coconut
- 1 Tbsp cinnamon
- 1/4 tsp fine sea salt
- 1/2 cup almond butter (creamy, unsweetened)
- 1/4 cup maple syrup
- 2 Tbsp coconut oil, melted
- 3 oz. unsweetened dried apples (about 1-1/2 cups, chopped)

Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F. Cover a large baking sheet with a nonstick pad or

parchment paper and set aside.

2. In a food processor, pulse nuts and seeds about 10 times until coarsely chopped.
3. Pour nuts and seeds into a large mixing bowl and toss together with the coconut, cinnamon, and salt.
4. In a small bowl, stir together the almond butter, maple syrup, and coconut oil until combined. (You can warm the nut butter 20-30 seconds in microwave to make it easier to stir.)
5. Add the wet (almond butter) mixture to the dry (nuts and seeds) mixture and stir until well combined.
6. Turn the mixture out onto the prepared baking sheet and press firmly into an even layer about 1-inch thick. It does not have to cover the whole pan.
7. Bake for 20-25 minutes until the top is slightly crisp. Remove from oven and cool completely on the pan before using your finger tips to crumble into large or small clusters.
8. Sprinkle the apples over the top of the clusters. Once fully cooled, transfer the granola to an airtight container. Can store for up to one week.

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Friday Facts

October 25, 2024

Apples for Dinner

EatingWell.com labels this fall dinner recipe, which was reviewed by a dietitian, as diabetes-friendly, low-sodium, heart-healthy, gluten-free, and low-calorie.

Apple, Bacon, & Sweet Potato Mini Casseroles

Ingredients

- 10 slices lower sodium, less fat bacon
- 2 cups chopped cooking apples
- 1/2 cup chopped onion
- 1 (10 oz.) sweet potato, peeled and cut into 1/4-inch pieces
- 2 tsp snipped fresh thyme or 1/2 tsp dried thyme, crushed
- 1/4 tsp black pepper
- 1-1/2 cups refrigerated or frozen egg product, thawed, or 6 eggs, lightly beaten
- 3/4 cup fat-free milk
- 3/4 cup shredded reduced-fat cheddar cheese (3 oz.)

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Coat a 12-cup muffin tin with cooking spray. Cut 4 of the bacon slices crosswise into thirds; chop the remaining bacon.
2. In a large skillet, cook large bacon pieces over medium until crisp. Drain bacon on paper towels; discard drippings. Add

chopped bacon, apples and onion to skillet. Cook over medium for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add sweet potato; cook 10 minutes or just until potato is tender, stirring frequently. Stir in thyme and pepper.

3. Divide potato mixture among the prepared muffin cups. In a medium bowl, combine egg and milk; pour over potato mixture (cups will be full). Top with cheese.
4. Bake 25 minutes or until puffed and a knife comes out clean. Let cool in the pan for 5 minutes. Remove from cups. Top with large bacon pieces. Serve warm.



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