

Health Benefits of Apples (recipes below)

From: <http://www.gopherglen.com/benefits.html>

We have all heard it hundreds of times — It is called the French paradox — that the consumption of red wine may lower the risk of heart attacks. But, have you heard what apples can do for your health?

The health benefits of apples and their products have been touted for centuries and gave rise to the old English saying "ate an apfel avore gwain to bed makes the doctor beg his bread." The modern version is "an apple a day keeps the doctor away."

Until very recently, the apple's health benefits were believed to be primarily as a dietary source rich in potassium and fiber. But in the last few years the documented health benefits have exploded! As little as one apple a day can produce the following:

- Reduce cancer of liver, colon, lung and prostate 1
- Reduce the risk of heart disease 2
- Increase lung function and also decrease lung disease, including asthma 3
- Decrease the risk of strokes 4

What can explain these remarkable effects? It may be due to a class of compounds called phytonutrients, strong natural antioxidants. For example, did you know that 2/3 of a medium sized fresh apple provides the total antioxidant activity of 1500 milligrams of vitamin C? That is 15 times the recommended daily allowance of vitamin C! 5

You see, in the old days, we thought of food as a source of calories, protein, fat, and carbohydrates. Later we found that vitamins, minerals and fiber played important roles too. Today much of our junk food and snacks publicize their contents of these substances. But now, it is being discovered that phytonutrients, flavinoids, and antioxidants play important roles in long-term health. Biochemicals such as quecetin, catechin and resveratrol are being discovered and their health benefits realized.

The total health benefits from apples may be greater than from it's individual components. These phytonutrients in apples and other natural foods may work together in synergy, which means that the total health benefit is greater than the sum of the components. Whole foods present a complicated and delicate balanced variety of nutrients that, working together in nature's proportions, offer enhanced nutritional benefits. Popping a vitamin pill or two just won't do it. Eat the way nature intended.

In all fairness, the onion is also rich in phytonutrients. So, you can eat your uncooked, pungent dry onion — or you can eat your crisp, sweet, juicy apple every day. The choice is yours.

From: <http://www.wholesomebabyfood.com/tipapple.htm>

"An Apple a Day" as the old saying goes is indeed good for your health. Apples are truly a wonder fruit and are also one on your infants first foods.

One of the most important nutritional components of Apples is that they contain two types of fiber; insoluble fiber and soluble fiber. Both the insoluble fiber in apples and their soluble fiber pectin help relieve constipation (thus helping to prevent diverticulosis and colon cancer. The insoluble fiber works like roughage, while the soluble fiber (pectin), which is found primarily in the skin, acts as a stool softener.

Health Benefit of Apples:

While the study of apples' health benefits is still in very early stages, research to date suggests that apples and apple nutrients may play a role in promoting human health in a number of ways, including: promoting cardiovascular health by lowering LDL cholesterol and inhibiting LDL oxidation, and reducing the risk of certain types of stroke; maintaining a healthy weight, as part of a low-fat, fiber-rich diet; promoting lung health, by countering the effects of oxidative damage; promoting prostate, liver and colon health, by inhibiting the growth of related cancer tumors; and promoting bone health, by providing a good source of the dietary mineral boron 1

Apples are a great choice for one of an infant's first food. They are easy to prepare, easy to digest and are full of nutrients. Apples are also very versatile and may be added to almost any baby recipe you find. You can mix apples with veggie purees, with meat purees and use them in teething biscuit recipes, in healthy cake recipes, in yogurt and mixed with other fruits also.

Apples are also great when frozen and used as a teething reliver when added to a Baby Safe Feeder. Applesauce is a great substitute for oil in many baked goods recipes. Please ensure that these recipes are age appropriate for YOUR baby! Substitute ingredients as needed. Check out the nutritional value of Apples below:

The Goodness of Apples: (one medium)

VITAMINS:

Vitamin A - 73 IU

Vitamin C - 9 mg

Folate (important during pregnancy) - 4 mcg

Vitamin E - .66 IU

MINERALS:

Potassium - 158 mg

Calcium - 9.5 mg

Phosphorus - 9.5 mg

Magnesium - 7 mg

Selenium - .4 mg

Also contains small amounts of iron, manganese, copper and zinc.

Not all of these recipes will be appropriate for some infants due to an infants age

Apple Purée/Applesauce

1/2 cup water
5 medium apples, cored, peeled, and diced
pinch of cinnamon if desired

Combine all ingredients in large saucepan and bring to a gentle boil
Lower heat and simmer until "sauce" like consistency is achieved; ensure that you check on the liquid level!

Mash, strain and puree the resulting "sauce" as needed
May be frozen in ice cube trays for baby food cubes

Apple Grain Breakfast Salad

3 cups water
1/4 teaspoon salt
3/4 cup quick-cooking brown rice
3/4 cup bulgur
1 Granny Smith apple
1 Red Delicious apple
1 orange or 1 large peach
1 cup raisins
1 container (8-ounce) low fat vanilla or plain yogurt

1.) In large pot, heat water and salt to boiling over high heat. Add rice and bulgur; reduce heat to low, cover, and cook 10 minutes. Remove from heat and set aside, covered 2 minutes. Spread hot grains on baking sheet to cool (this will make them fluffier). Grains can be prepared the night before and kept refrigerated.

2.) Just before serving, prepare fruit: Core and chop apples; peel orange and cut into sections. Add apples, orange or peach, and raisins to grain mixture. Stir in yogurt to coat grains and fruit. Sprinkle with wheat germ.

Apple Smoothie

2 C applesauce
1 C 100% apple juice or apple cider
1 C orange juice
2 T honey* *over 12 months old*
1/2 tsp ground cinnamon
1/2 tsp ground nutmeg

Place all ingredients in a blender, and blend until smooth. Serve immediately, or keep chilled until serving time. Garnish with additional cinnamon, if desired. Makes 2 servings. *from The Apple Cookbook*

Apple Ice

5 cups peeled and sliced Granny Smith or Macintosh apples
1 cup water
3/4 cup sugar
1/2 teaspoon finely grated lemon zest

1.) In large saucepot, simmer apples, water, and sugar until apples are tender -- about 20 minutes. In food processor or blender, puree mixture until smooth; stir in lemon zest.

2.) Transfer mixture to 8- or 9-inch metal pan and freeze until almost solid. Return to food processor or blender and puree until chunks break up and mixture is fluffy. Refreeze until firm.

Apple Butter

4 pounds Granny Smith or Macintosh apples, peeled, cored and quartered,
1 cup water
1 cup apple cider
Brown sugar as needed
2 teaspoons cinnamon
1 teaspoon ground cloves
1/2 teaspoon allspice
Grated rind and juice of 2 lemons

Cook the apples in the liquid until soft. Pass through a food mill. Add 1/2 cup brown sugar for each cup of puree. Add the spices, rind and lemon juice and cook over very low heat until thick and dark brown. This may take 3 to 4 hours. If not to be used within a week or two, pour into hot sterilized jars and seal tightly.