

Summer Fruits

Summer is one of the busiest times of the year. With vacations, cookouts, pool parties, weddings, and graduation parties, healthy eating can feel like a challenge. A simple way to incorporate nutrient dense foods this season is by choosing seasonal fruit. Seasonal fruits are at peak ripeness and typically have a better flavor profile; they are more affordable and are packed with nutrients.

During the months of June through August, fruits such as berries, peaches, plums, nectarines, melons, grapes and cherries are in season. These fruits are full of vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants that support overall health. They contain fiber to support healthy digestion and satiation, natural carbohydrates for a boost of energy, and even water to keep you hydrated.

Berries

Strawberries, blueberries, raspberries, and blackberries are summer favorites for good reason. Berries are packed with nutrients and are one of the best fruit sources of fiber. For example, one cup of raspberries contains about 8 grams of fiber. Blueberries may help support brain health and memory. Blackberries are rich in vitamin C, which supports the immune system. Strawberries are another excellent source of vitamin C and add natural sweetness to meals and snacks. Easy ways to incorporate berries include adding them to smoothies, as a topping for oatmeal, mixing into salads, or just enjoying by

the handful. Consider planning a trip to a local berry farm or farmer's market for a fun summer activity!

Stone Fruits

Peaches, plums, nectarines, and cherries are often called stone fruits because each contains a large pit in the center. These fruits are juicy, flavorful, and easy to enjoy fresh. Peaches provide fiber, especially when eaten with the skin. Plums contain nutrients that may help support heart and bone health. Their natural fiber content can also support healthy digestion. Cherries, especially tart cherries, have gained attention for their potential health benefits. Research suggests tart cherries may help support recovery after exercise, healthy sleep, and inflammation management. They also contain antioxidants that support overall wellness. Get creative with how you prepare these fruits – consider grilling peaches and adding them to a salad or dessert, slicing nectarines on top of a yogurt bowl, or grabbing a plum for an easy grab-n-go snack.

Melons

Watermelon, cantaloupe, and honeydew are excellent choices during hot weather because of their high water content. Watermelon is made up of more than 90% water, making it a refreshing option after spending a day in the sun. Watermelon also contains citrulline, a natural compound that may help support exercise recovery. Cantaloupe is rich in vitamin A and vitamin C, while honeydew provides potassium and hydration. Try pairing melon with cheese for a satiating snack,

tossing watermelon with basil, feta, and a drizzle of honey for a picnic side dish, or even sprinkling Tajin® for an extra boost of flavor. If you have been sweating in the heat, adding a small pinch of salt can even help replace sodium lost through sweat and bring out a stronger flavor.

Grapes

Grapes contain antioxidants and vitamin C that support overall health. They also provide water, making them another hydrating fruit choice. Add this fruit to your chicken or tuna salads or freeze them for a refreshing snack after a long day at the pool.

These summer fruits can be consumed fresh, frozen, dried or even as fruit juice. It's important to remember that fruit juice lacks fiber content compared to the whole fruit. This can lead to a blood sugar spike when consumed on its own. If able, try consuming fruits whole to receive all the health benefits. To make a snack more satiating, consider pairing fruit with a fat or protein source for lasting energy.

Don't overcomplicate your nutrition this season! Adding fruit to meals and snacks is an easy way to support your health without too much extra effort. Whether you're using fresh or frozen fruit, these foods can help you feel energized, hydrated, and satiated all summer long.

Reference:

Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. (2021, August 23). Honey roasted plums recipe. <https://www.eatright.org/recipes/desserts/honey-roasted-plums-recipe>

Honey Roasted Plums

Recipe from the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics; Mackenzie Burgess, RDN

Serves: 4

Serving Size: 2 plum halves with toppings (105g)

Ingredients:

4 small plums, halved and pitted
2 tablespoons honey, divided
¼ cup plain nonfat Greek yogurt
¼ cup walnuts, roughly chopped

Instructions:

1. Preheat oven to 400°F (204°C)
2. Place plum halves cut side up on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper.
3. Drizzle 1 tablespoon of honey evenly over plums.
4. Roast plums for 10 minutes, or until tender and edges begin to brown.
5. To serve, transfer two plum halves to a plate and top each with 1 tablespoon yogurt and 1 tablespoon chopped walnuts. Repeat with remaining plum halves. Drizzle the remaining 1 tablespoon honey evenly over all halves before serving.

Nutrition Information: 132 calories, 5g total fat, 0g saturated fat, 1mg cholesterol, 16mg sodium, 22g carbohydrate, 1g fiber, 10g sugar, 3g protein, 115mg potassium, 56mg phosphorus

Would you like to work with a Registered Dietitian?

To schedule an appointment, please obtain a referral for **Medical Nutrition Therapy** and contact: **412-692-4497 (Oakland) OR 412-623-2421 (Shadyside)**
