



Chef Charles Says...



December

Pick a Better... Dried Fruit

Fruit is the original convenience food! All you have to do is wash and eat, and dried fruit does not require any preparation. It is easy to pack and will not spoil. Compared to fresh fruit, dried fruit can contain more calories by weight.

The water content in fresh fruit can help to fill up your stomach. Fresh fruits are naturally rich in antioxidants, fiber, potassium, folate and vitamins C and A. Dried fruits have similar nutritional benefits, but the process of drying the fruit concentrates the calories and depletes some nutrients like vitamin C.

On the positive side, dried fruit has other benefits such as increased antioxidants. For example, researchers have discovered that when you dry blueberries, they actually become richer in antioxidants by four times over fresh blueberries. Dried fruit is high in fiber, so it can be helpful in controlling diabetes and lowering blood cholesterol. Dried fruits in small amounts can be substituted for fresh or canned and can help to relieve constipation.

Dried fruit is also a lot healthier than sugary snacks even though some dried fruits have added sugar because of the fruit's tartness. Consider eating a small portion of dried fruit for a simple, convenient snack.



Pictured are dried apricots, cranberries, pineapple, strawberries, and trail mix with banana chips, papaya and nuts.

Get the News

Vitamin D Deficiency Could Be Harmful

Many older adults, particularly those in northern, less-sunny winter areas like Iowa, may be deficient in vitamin D. This could increase the risk of dying. From a study of adults age 73 and older researchers found that low vitamin D levels were independently associated with the risk of death over a period of seven years.



Vitamin D deficiency appeared to affect the heart most of all. Older adults should get at least 400 to 600 IUs of vitamin D a day. Recent research suggests we may need more vitamin D. Experts are expecting the recommendation to be changed when the Dietary Guidelines for Americans are released early next year. Your congregate meal provides an average of 100 IU daily. *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society*; Sept. 2009



Developed by:
Iowa Department of Public Health, www.idph.state.ia.us/nutritionnetwork
Iowa Department on Aging, www.state.ia.us/elderaffairs

Information & resources for seniors with home & family questions
ISU AnswerLine 1-800-262-3804

Food Safety: Hand Washing

While it is common sense to wash your hands before preparing food, many people do not follow proper hand-washing techniques. If your food is prepared without proper hand washing, the bacteria that are transferred to the food can begin to grow and, in a short time contaminate the food you are handling.

Proper hand washing begins with wetting the hands with warm water. Once your hands are wet, apply soap and scrub your hands for 20 seconds. One suggestion is to sing through the Happy Birthday song once as you wash your hands. Rinse the hands in warm water. Dry on a

clean towel. Be careful that you do not touch anything else before you touch your food.

In commercial kitchens, workers are taught to wash their hands in the restroom and then follow the same procedure once they get back to the kitchen before touching food. This would also be a good practice in your own home.

Washing your hands before leaving the kitchen

helps to remove any bacteria that may have been on the food you were preparing so that you do not spread the germs to the rest of your home.

Remember to wash your hands:

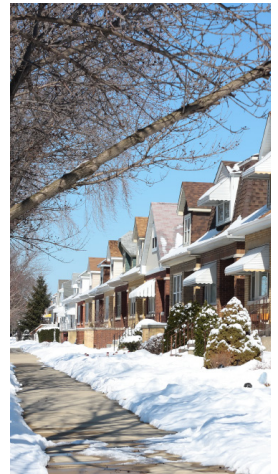
- ◆ After handling raw meat
- ◆ After handling raw eggs
- ◆ After petting an animal
- ◆ After using the bathroom
- ◆ After coughing or sneezing into your hands
- ◆ Before eating



Be Active

Walk Your Winter Wonderland

The season of winter begins this month. Along with the change of seasons comes snow and cold. But that does not mean you have to stop walking. Here are some tips to make winter walking safe:



- ◆ Dress for it. Wear brightly, colored, cold-weather clothing, gloves, hat and well-insulated water-proof footwear with nonslip soles. Dress warmly, but not so bundled up that you cannot hear or see what is going on around you. During the daytime when the sun is shining, wear sunglasses.
- ◆ Choose your route. Select a path with no snow or ice when possible. When walking in the wind, try to start your walk into the wind and finish with it at your back. Share your route with friends and family in case of an emergency.
- ◆ Watch for traffic. If you have to walk in the street, walk against the traffic and as close to the curb as you can.
- ◆ Keep your balance. Bending your knees a little and taking slower steps can help you stay balanced.
- ◆ Pace yourself. In cold weather, warm up longer at a moderate pace before you switch to a faster speed.



Chef Charles

Says...

Choose the Best Fruit

- ◆ Buy in season. Fruit that is not in season locally must come from a place where it is in season - and that may be far away. Picking fruit before it is ripe travels better - but it may lack flavor.
- ◆ Remember that buying under ripe produce isn't always the best option. Peaches, cantaloupe and nectarines are examples of fruits that may soften during storage, but they won't ripen.
- ◆ Pick the fruit up. If it's heavy for its size, then you have successfully found yourself a good piece of fruit.



Chef Charles Asks the Questions

Does Strength Training Benefit Older Adults?

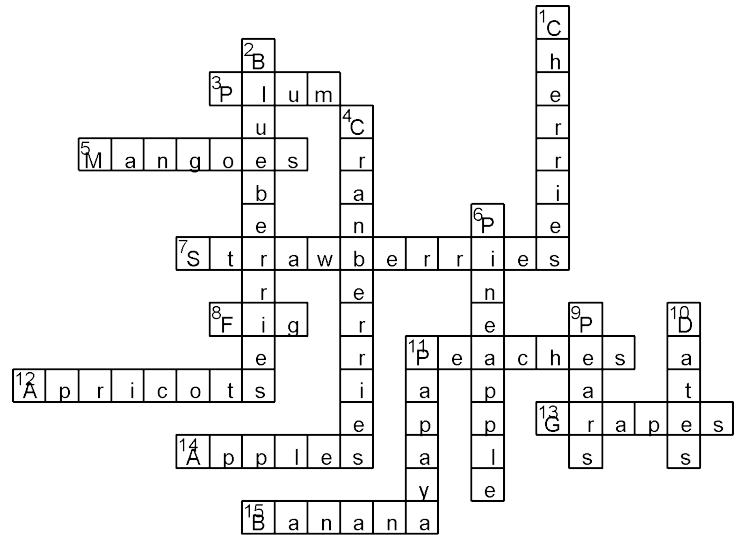
It certainly does. In fact, the benefits of strength training such as lifting weights or pulling on wide elastic bands, color-coded for resistance, are among the strongest findings in medical research.

A review of 121 studies of people over the age of 60 shows that strength training makes muscles substantially stronger and helps people with everyday activities such as walking, climbing steps, etc.

The take-home message is that people, even into their 80s and even if they have some health problems, should do exercises two to three times a week. Each exercise session should be hard enough so that you can only do three sets of 8 to 12 repetitions of each exercise. Once you feel the resistance is not enough of a challenge, you can increase to the next level of more difficult elastic bands. According to exercise experts, strength training is actually safer than regular aerobic exercise when considering risks of a cardiac event. If you have a special medical condition such as heart disease or arthritis, check with your health care provider before starting and monitor any pain associated with the exercise.

Source: Cochrane Collaboration; Sept. 2009;
<http://www.cochrane.org>

Answers



Holiday Oranges



- 1 navel orange
- 2 teaspoons orange juice
- 2 teaspoons lemon juice
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- ¼ teaspoon cinnamon

Remove rind and white pith from orange. Cut into 5 or 6 slices and arrange on a plate. Stir together orange juice, lemon juice, sugar and cinnamon. Spoon over slices.

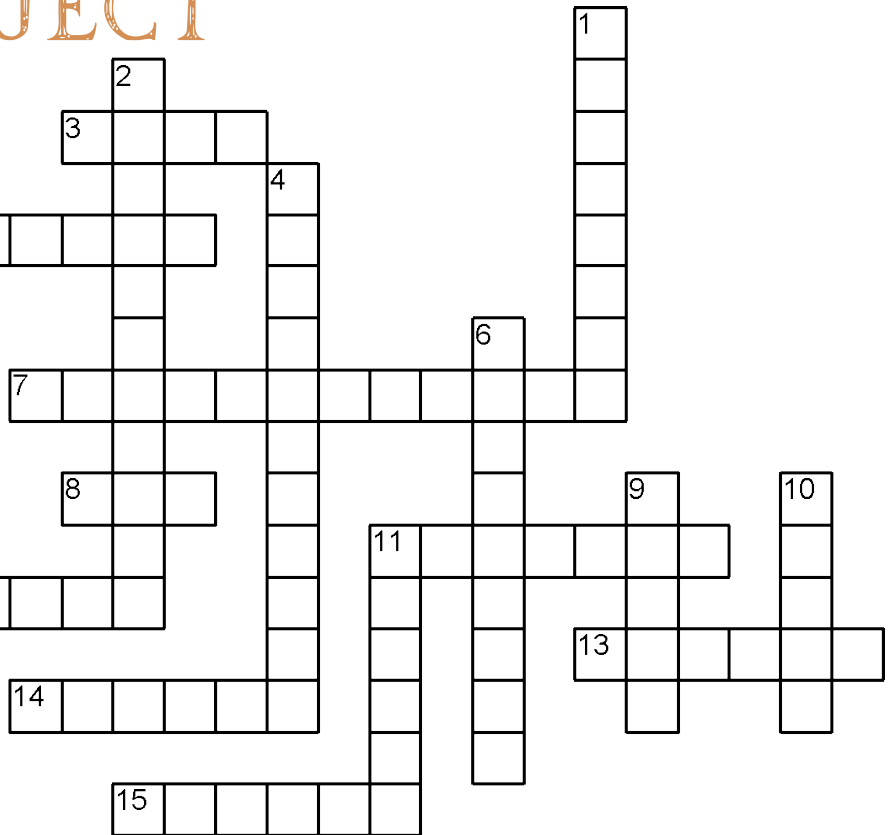
86 calories; 22 g carbohydrates; 3 g fiber; 2 mg sodium, 258 mg potassium; 57 mcg folate



A DRY SUBJECT

Across

3. The dried form of this fruit is known to help regulate the digestive system.
5. A tropical dried fruit used in baking and chutneys.
7. Dried pieces of this red berry are popular in cereals.
8. This fruit can be eaten fresh or dried, or made into a paste to fill cookies.
11. Classified as clingstone or freestone, this fruit may be dried in the sun or heated wind tunnel
12. Turkey is a leading producer of this dried fruit.
13. The dried form of this fruit is called a raisin.
14. Chips of this fruit can be eaten as a snack or rehydrated for pies.
15. Dried chips of this yellow fruit have an intense flavor.



Word Bank

Apples, Apricots,
Banana, Blueberries,
Cherries, Cranberries
Dates, Fig, Grapes,
Mangoes, Papaya,
Peaches, Pears,
Pineapple, Plum,
Strawberries

Down

1. This small red tree fruit is good in salads, baked goods and is good in sauces for pork.
2. Popular in cereals and muffins, this dried berry was also used as a rub to flavor meat by Native Americans.
4. This dried berry is very tart and usually has added sugar.
6. This fruit is available in dried chunks or rings.
9. A green or yellow fruit with a distinctive, heavy-bottom shape.
10. The fruit of a type of palm tree cultivated in the Middle East.
11. This fruit that is native to the tropical Americas is dried in chunks and spears.

Resource

Find a *Matter of Balance* workshop near you.

Falls are the second leading cause of injury deaths overall in Iowa and the leading cause of death for Iowans age 65 and older! Falls are also the leading cause of injury hospitalizations and emergency room visits in Iowa.

Studies indicate that up to half of older adults experience a fear of falling and often respond to this concern by curtailing activity. A Matter of Balance emphasizes practical strategies to reduce this fear and increase activity levels. Through a series of eight, two-hour workshops, participants learn to view falls and fear of falling as controllable and to set realistic goals for increasing their strength and balance. Workshops are offered in many locations across Iowa. Find the nearest workshop at <http://www.aging.iowa.gov/>.

