



Join us for the Fitwize

Nutrition Session

Friday, October 19
4 to 5 PM!

Fall Food Favorites!

This month we will experiment with many of the foods that become popular and abundant this time of year. These include apples and pumpkins. We'll learn how to include these fall favorites in our snacks and meals.

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Miller Method for Fitwize

10.18



Fall Food Favorites

By Stephanie Mull, MS, RD, CSSD, CSCS

Pumpkin everything is back in stores and on shelves! This means fall has officially arrived. Pumpkins aren't the only fall fun food we can experience. Apples peak at this time of year and experimenting with the many varieties can be fun. Below is a brief list of some fall foods that can be fun to try and use in different ways.

- Apples – I'm sure you've heard that an apple a day can keep the doctor away. Research has proven that! Apples are full of antioxidants, which can keep the immune system strong. There are over 7,500 varieties of apples Fuji is one that has a high concentration of phenols and flavonoids. Honeycrisp apples are one of the sweetest varieties available and have a short shelf life as a result. Apples can be pureed and added to smoothies or they can be sliced and topped with cinnamon and a drizzle of honey for a crunchy snack.
- Pumpkins – Rather than buying all those pumpkin flavored products that catch your eye in the store, you will get more nutritional benefit from stocking up on cans of pureed pumpkin and sneak some into your cooking. You can add pureed pumpkin to chili or pasta sauce for a nutrient boost. You can also whisk pureed pumpkin into pancake mix for a delicious alternative to a breakfast favorite. Most of the pumpkin flavored products on the market are simply that – flavored with pumpkin spice. Yes they taste good but to get the most benefit, look for pumpkin as an ingredient.
- Cranberries – We may think of cranberries as a holiday addition but they peak at this time of year. Fresh cranberries offer many health benefits including urinary tract health and a healthy immune system. You can add cranberries to salads or oatmeal for a tart flavor.
- Pomegranates – These tart fruits are a concentrated source of antioxidants. You seem pomegranate flavored foods like Chobani's Greek yogurt and granola bars. Try adding pomegranate seeds to plain or vanilla yogurt, oatmeal, your snack mix, salad, or just have them plain!
- Pears – They are very similar to apples. They are juicy and offer many health benefits by being a good source of fiber and antioxidants. Pears can be enjoyed in cooking, sliced and topped with cinnamon or nutmeg, or eaten whole.



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In the nutrition session this month, we'll discuss these foods and taste test a few of them. We'll also enjoy this delicious slow cooker pumpkin oatmeal. The best part is you throw everything together in your slow cooker and leave it overnight. No preparing breakfast the next day! I encourage you to try making this at home!

Slow Cooker Pumpkin Pie Oatmeal (adopted from <https://www.superhealthykids.com/slow-cooker-pumpkin-pie-oatmeal/>)

- 4 cup – water
- 2 cup – steel cut oats
- 1 cup – coconut milk
- 1 ½ cup – pumpkin, canned
- ½ cup – maple syrup, pure
- 1 tablespoon – cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon – ginger, ground
- 1 teaspoon – nutmeg
- 1 tablespoon – vanilla extract
- ½ teaspoon – sea salt

Directions

1. Use an oil spray to coat the inside of your slow cooker.
2. Add all ingredients to the slow cooker, stirring to combine.
3. Cover and cook on low for 8 hours.
4. Once done cooking, the oatmeal may look liquidy; this is normal. Give the finished oatmeal a good stir before serving hot. Store leftovers in the fridge for a week, or in the freezer for a month.

This recipe works great in your Instant Pot in a fraction of the time! Follow the recipe as directed; cook on manual pressure for 10 minutes.

For more information on a specific fruit or vegetable, check out the following website for basic information, nutrition details and suggestions for use: www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org