



Dessert - A Healthy End to the Meal

Most people look forward to dessert – sweet, creamy, delicious, comforting food. Most of us do not look forward to the high calories, high fat and low nutrient levels of most desserts. So how do we enjoy dessert and maintain a healthy diet? Try saving the rich desserts for very special occasions and learn to make other desserts a part of the healthy diet.



wheat. Whole wheat pastry flour, if available, works even better in baked products.

Sweet and Creamy

Most desserts are high in sugar. You can reduce the sugar by about 25 percent in most homemade baked goods. You can reduce the fat by using skim or low-fat dairy products. Part of the fat, up to one-half can be replaced by prune puree (use a jar of prune baby food) or fat free plain yogurt.

Fruit for Dessert

Fruit can be a sweet ending to a meal. This time of year fresh apples and pears make a terrific dessert. For a simple tasty dessert peel and chop apples or pears, sprinkle with about a teaspoon of sugar per cup of fruit, then microwave until tender. Stir in a few raisins or berries if you like, but don't add water – the fruit makes its own syrup as it cooks. Enjoy the fruit warm by itself or sprinkle with a crunchy low-fat granola cereal to make a fruit crisp.

Make Dessert Whole Grain

Cakes and cookies are usually made with white flour, but you can add fiber and nutrients by substituting whole wheat flour. Try replacing half the white flour with whole

Read Carefully

Fat-free desserts are not necessarily healthful or low in calories. Sometimes the fat is replaced by extra sugar and may actually have even more calories and carbohydrates. Foods like carrot cake and zucchini bread sound like they should be good for you, but may be higher in calories and lower in vegetables than you think. A slice of zucchini bread has about 230 calories and only 4 teaspoons of zucchini.

Enjoy your healthy dessert, but remember you can have too much of a good thing. You still need to be careful about the portion size and plan dessert with your total meal in mind.

