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July is National Ice Cream Month. The National Dairy Council suggests scooping up vanilla ice cream with raspberries and blueberries to make a red, white and blue ice cream dish for the Fourth of July.

Here's a pear crisp recipe — light in calories and heavy on flavor — and topped by a lowfat ice cream or a nonfat frozen yogurt from the American Institute for Cancer Research. Though it looks like a lot of ingredients, the technique of mixing the crisp topping in your food processor makes quick work of preparing this recipe. Leave the pear skins on to save time and increase the fiber content.

Pear Crisp

(makes 9 servings)

- 1/4 cup rolled oats
- 1 tablespoon walnuts
- 3 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 3 tablespoons whole wheat flour
- 2 1/2 tablespoons packed light brown sugar
- 1/8 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1 tablespoon plus 2 teaspoons canola oil
- 6 firm, yet ripe pears, peeled (if desired), cored and cubed
- 1/4 cup raisins
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 2 tablespoons flour
- 1/8 teaspoon nutmeg
- Pinch of cloves
- Caramel pecan or vanilla nonfat frozen yogurt or lowfat ice cream (optional)

- 1) Preheat oven to 375° F. Lightly spray 8- or 9- inch round cake pan.
- 2) In food processor, pulse oats and walnuts 15 seconds. Add flour, brown sugar and cinnamon. Blend 15 more seconds. While running, drizzle oil and blend 30 seconds. Transfer to bowl and set aside.
- 3) In another bowl, toss pears with next 6 ingredients. Spoon pears into prepared cake pan. Cover with oat mixture, pressing down gently. Bake 45-50 minutes, until topping is brown and pears are bubbling. Serve hot, topped with nonfat frozen yogurt or lowfat ice cream, if desired.

Nutritional Analysis per serving: 164 calories, 4 g. total fat (<1 g. saturated fat), 34 g. carbohydrates, 2 g. protein, 4 g. dietary fiber, 3 mg. sodium.

Recipe courtesy of American Institute for Cancer Research www.aicr.org

July is also National Blueberry Month. Of more than 50 plant foods tested by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, blueberries scored among the highest in antioxidant power. Research suggests eating blueberries and other high-antioxidant fruits and vegetables may retard the oxidative damage to tissues associated with aging. The following smoothie recipe, from the National Cancer Institute may also be made with blueberries.

Note: Using frozen fruits helps thicken the smoothie. To freeze fresh berries, wash them thoroughly in running tap water, pat dry with clean paper towels and freeze in a single layer on a rimmed cookie sheet. Transfer to a freezer bag when frozen. Pour out as needed.

Peach-Raspberry Smoothie

(serves 1)

- 1 cup unsweetened, frozen raspberries
- 3/4 cup 100% orange juice (if you use frozen juice, don't forget to dilute first)
- 1/2 cup fruit-flavored, low-fat yogurt (try peach)

VARIATIONS

- Frozen strawberries, blueberries, mixed berries, mango or peaches
- Pineapple juice, orange-tangerine juice and other 100 percent juice blends
- Different yogurt flavors

Blend all ingredients well in blender and drink!

Recipe courtesy of National Cancer Institute www.5aday.gov

Cool It! Use a Refrigerator/Freezer Thermometer

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A different refrigerator and freezer setting may be needed during warmer months than colder months to maintain the same temperature in your refrigerator and freezer. Using a refrigerator/freezer thermometer is the only way to assure your refrigerator and freezer are at the correct temperature for optimum food storage.

40° F or lower is the recommended **refrigerator** temperature to slow bacterial growth and maintain quality. Freezing occurs at 32° F; adjust refrigerator accordingly between 34° F and 40° F to prevent unwanted freezing, such as freezing milk.

0° F or lower is the recommended **freezer** temperature. At this temperature, bacterial growth will be stopped. However, freezing does not kill most bacteria, nor does it stop flavor changes that occur over time.

Though food will be safe indefinitely at 0° F, quality will decrease the longer the food is in the freezer.

The numbers used to adjust the temperature on most home refrigerators only raise or lower the temperature. They do not match specific temperatures.

Most refrigerator/freezer thermometers are either liquid-filled or bimetallic-coil thermometers. USDA describes these thermometers as follows.

Liquid-filled thermometers are the oldest types of thermometers used in home kitchens. As the temperature increases, the colored liquid (usually an alcohol solution) inside the thermometer expands and rises to indicate the temperature on a scale.

Bimetallic-coil thermometers contain a coil made of two different metals with different rates of expansion that are

bonded together. The bimetal element is coiled, fixed at one end, and attached to a pointer stem at the other end. As the temperature increases, the pointer will be rotated by the coiled bimetal element to indicate the temperature.

Purchase refrigerator/freezer thermometers in the housewares section of department, appliance, culinary and grocery stores. **Buy two!** Place one in your refrigerator and one in your freezer. It may be the best \$10 to \$20 investment you ever make. Two more tips:

- 1) Place the thermometer in the front of the refrigerator/freezer in an easy-to-read location.
- 2) Check temperature regularly — at least once a week.

NOTE: If the freezer compartment isn't a separate freezer compartment, but a compartment inside the refrigerator, it may be impossible to obtain a 0° F temperature. One sign of this will be soft ice cream. Plan to use food within a few weeks.



Take a Salad Spinner for a Spin!

Salad dressing slides off damp salad greens and collects in the bottom of the salad bowl. You'll get more flavor with less dressing (and fewer calories!) if salad greens are washed and thoroughly dried before tossing your salad with dressing. A tablespoon of an oil and vinegar dressing may be all it takes for two cups of dried salad greens.

The easiest and **quickest** way to dry salad greens is in a

salad spinner.

A salad spinner uses centrifugal force to remove water from freshly washed salad greens and herbs. Your wet greens are placed in a perforated basket that fits in a larger outer bowl. The bowl is covered with a lid that has a gear-operated handle, pull-cord or knob that you pump to turn the inner basket and spin the water off into the outer bowl.

When purchasing a salad spinner, take it for a spin at the store! You want a model that is sturdy, has a well-fitting lid and spins easily. Choose a model large enough so you don't have to go through several "spin cycles" to dry all your greens.

Pack greens lightly to avoid overcrowding and bruising them. After spinning, pat off any remaining moisture with clean paper towels. (AH)

Don't Be Fooled by Fads

Being healthy requires making positive changes in eating habits and being active. What can you do to be successful?

Recognize Red Flags that Signal Unsound Nutrition Advice

1. Diets that restrict eating to one type of food or food group and promise quick weight loss.
2. Lists of "good foods" and "bad foods".
3. Claims with words or phrases such as: effortless, guaranteed, magical or miraculous.
4. If it sounds too good to be true.
5. If it uses "testimonials" from a few people (famous people in particular).

Eat a Variety of Foods

Remember, eating should be enjoyable. Eat a wide variety of foods from different food groups. Eating a variety of food helps provide vitamins, minerals and nutrients for good health. Eat more foods naturally high in fiber: fruits, vegetables, legumes

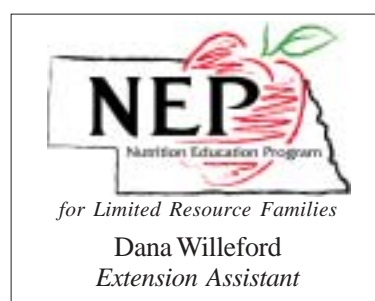
and whole grains. Fad diets can be very monotonous and boring. It's almost impossible to stay on them for any length of time.

Watch Those Portion Sizes

There are no "miracle" foods that exist. Eat moderate amounts from all food groups, not large amounts of a few special foods. Serving sizes today are much larger than in the past. Don't be fooled! Some items sold as a single portion may actually provide two or more. If eating out, split a meal with a friend or take home half of your meal. Limit portions of foods high in fat.

Be Active

Some fad diets may even claim you can lose weight without exercise. Make it a habit to increase your activity even if it's small. Make simple changes such as: parking farther away in the parking lot to increase the distance you walk to the store. Get out and play with your kids. Wash your car by hand instead of at the car wash.



The reports have been out. Most likely you've heard the growing obesity trends for Americans and the health consequences that come with it. In fact, you may have been exploring the several options available for reaching a healthy weight and eating right. Frankly, it can be confusing!

Nutrition advice comes in many disguises and Americans spend billions of dollars each year looking into "quick fixes" for weight management. The problem with some of these diets is most of the time they offer questionable nutrition information and false promises. You may have also noticed that many of these diets restrict eating to primarily one type of food.