

Nutrition Education

Apples

Golden Delicious, Cameo, Pink Lady, Granny Smith and Fuji—no matter what type of apple you like, they all pack a nutritional punch! Research suggests that an apple a day may truly help to keep the doctor away. Apples are a rich source of antioxidant compounds which help prevent damage to cells and tissues. The flavonoids in apples, especially quercetin, have been shown to reduce inflammation which plays a role in diseases such as arthritis. In laboratory studies, quercetin was able to slow the growth of cancerous cells. Research suggests that apples may reduce the risk of colon cancer, prostate cancer and lung cancer. The fiber content of apples aids in controlling cholesterol and regulating bowel movements. Apples can help promote weight loss because they are low in calories yet very filling due to their fiber and water content.

Apples are very portable and don't need much more than a quick rinse before they are eaten. It is important to eat the skin of the apple as many of the healthy compounds are located there. For example, apples without skin contain less than half the amount of quercetin as whole apples.

To make a healthier applesauce at home, do not remove the skin. Instead, core the apples and then shred them, skin and all. A food processor can make quick work of shredding apples. Add a small amount of water to your shredded apples and cook them down on the stove top until they are soft. If you start with tasty apples, there is no need to add sugar. The result will be a delicious applesauce with a chunky texture. If you prefer a smoother applesauce, puree your cooked apples in a blender or a Vita-Mix. Refrigerate and eat within 3-4 days. You may freeze extra applesauce and thaw it when you are ready to use it. Applesauce works well in baked goods such as quick breads and muffins to substitute for half or more of the oil called for in the recipe.

