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FALL IS THE TIME FOR DELICIOUS APPLES

Fall is the time for apples and nothing is more American than apple pie. I grew up hearing that along with, “An apple a day keeps the doctor away,” and honestly believed it eating one just about every single day. They grew along the edges of my front yard providing shade and beauty and yummy homemade applesauce year round. As kids we picked the tart crab apples off the trees and fed them to the horses. In school we learned about Johnny Appleseed, known as John Chapman (1774-1845), who planted apple trees along the trails that he traveled so he could have a snack along the way.

So with all this exposure to apples, are they really good for you? One large apple contains only 110 calories and 5 grams of soluble fiber, supplying 20% of the fiber you need each day. Apples are sodium; fat and cholesterol free making them a great choice for a variety of diets. The fiber, pectin, helps to reduce cholesterol levels and components found in the skin of the apple known as phytochemicals and flavonoid, quercetin, have been linked with reduced cancer risk in several studies. Additionally they are a good source of potassium with 227 mg of this important mineral and electrolyte.

Apples can be purchased locally where you can get the freshest and most nutritious product available. A trip into the countryside to get apples from an orchard makes for a great family outing. To locate a market in Frederick County visit <http://www.homegrownfrederick.com/find-local-products>

Select apples that are firm and free of bruises and punctures. Store apples in the refrigerator at 32°F in the crisper drawer or a plastic bag. Apples ripen up to 10 times faster at room temperature than when refrigerated. Wash apples thoroughly whether they are to be used raw or cooked. Apple dishes should be prepared just before serving to minimize browning, known as oxidation. Protect cut apples from oxidation by dipping them into a solution of one part lemon juice and three parts water or sprinkling with Fruit Fresh®.

There are over 100y varieties of apples grown in the US but 15 varieties account for 90% of production. Some are sweet, some tart, and some in-between. Everyone has their personal favorite but be adventurous and try a new one. On a trip to Japan I sampled the Fuji apple and now it is one of my favorites. The most versatile apples are Braeburn, Cortland, Crispin, Empire, Gala, and Golden Delicious since they are excellent for every use – eating, baking, pies, salads and sauces.

Try these recipes for enjoying one of America’s favorite fruits or eat them just as they are.

APPLE CHEESE MELT -- *Quick, easy, nutritious snack!*

1 apple
1 ounce cheddar cheese

Wash apple and cut crosswise. Discard seeds. Place thinly cut slices of cheese on apple and broil until cheese is bubbly.

NO SUGAR ADDED HOMEMADE APPLESAUCE

This is a family favorite – so easy to make, so healthy, so delicious!

3 pounds Granny Smith apples
5 cinnamon sticks

Peel and core apples. Cut into small pieces and place in crock pot with 5 cinnamon sticks. Cook on high for 3 hours until apples are soft. For chunkier applesauce, cook on low for 3 to 5 hours until desired consistency.

FRESH APPLE CAKE

1/4 cup softened butter
1/2 cup sugar
1 egg
1 2/3 cups all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
Dash of salt
2 pounds medium-size eating apples, peeled and sliced (6 cups)
2/3 cup sugar
1/4 cup all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
3 eggs, separated
3 tablespoons sugar
1/4 teaspoon vanilla
3 tablespoons dairy sour cream

Beat butter (margarine) until fluffy in large bowl of electric mixer; add sugar and egg. Beat at high speed 3 minutes or until thick and light. Sift flour, baking powder and salt into wax paper; stir into egg-butter mixture. Shape dough into a roll 6 inches long and 1 1/2 inches thick; wrap in wax paper. Chill in refrigerator 30 minutes. Grease bottom and side of 10 inch spring form pan; flour bottom only. Slice roll into thin rounds with a sharp knife. Cover bottom of pan with rounds; pat together to form crust. Stand remaining rounds around side of pan, pressing lightly into place. Chill in refrigerator 10 minutes. Toss apples with sugar, flour and cinnamon. Place apples overlapping in lined pan; sprinkle with any remaining sugar mixture. Bake in moderate oven 350° for 1 hour. Beat egg yolks with sugar and vanilla until thick and light in color; stir in sour cream. Beat egg whites until stiff; fold into egg yolk mixture. Spread over apples. Bake 15 minutes longer, or until topping is lightly browned. Remove from oven; cool. Remove side of pan; carefully slide cake from bottom of pan to serving dish. Garnish with additional apple slices if you wish. Cake may be baked in a 9x9x2 inch baking pan. Cut cake in squares and serve from pan.

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