



♥ Healthy Heart, Happy Heart



February is heart health month!

There are many things we can do to maintain heart health no matter our age! It is good to foster a love of exercise and balanced eating starting at a young age. A strong foundation of healthy lifestyle choices will put children on the path towards long term cardiovascular health.

Foods such as oats, avocados and berries found in the recipe provided are great examples of foods that benefit heart health! Oats help to lower cholesterol, avocados are full of essential fatty acids (called essential because we need to eat them!) and berries are full of antioxidants.



Happy Valentines Day!

Children may get chocolate from friends, teachers or family during the month of February! Dark chocolate, in moderation, is known to have many health benefits due to the higher amount of cocoa compared to other types of chocolate. Benefits include a reduced risk of heart disease and stroke. If you are thinking of gifting chocolate to someone you love, consider choosing dark chocolate this year!



Oat Avocado - Berry Breakfast Bars

Ingredients:

Crust / Topping Ingredients

- Cooking spray
- 1 3/4 cups low-fat, low sugar granola
- 1 1/2 cups whole-wheat flour
- 2 tablespoon firmly packed brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 cup fat-free sour cream
- 2 tablespoon canola oil

Filling Ingredients

- 1/2 cup pitted, coarsely chopped dates
- 1/2 cup avocado
- 1 cup frozen, unsweetened blueberries
- 1 tablespoon grated orange zest
- 1 teaspoon cornstarch

- Preheat the oven to 350°F. Lightly spray a 13 x 9 x 2-inch baking pan with cooking spray.
- Put the granola in a food processor. Pulse three times to break apart the large pieces (it should look like rolled oats). Transfer the granola to a large bowl. Stir in the flour, brown sugar, cinnamon, and salt until combined. Add the sour cream and oil.
- Using a pastry blender or large fork, blend the mixture until it resembles pea-size crumbs.
- Set aside one-half of the granola mixture. Press the other half into the baking pan to form a crust.
- Bake the crust for 20 minutes, or until slightly browned. Transfer to a cooling rack. Let cool to room temperature.
- Meanwhile, in a food processor, process the dates until smooth. Add the avocado, processing until smooth. Add the blueberries, orange zest, and cornstarch, processing until smooth.
- Spoon the filling onto the cooled crust. Use a spatula to spread it. Sprinkle the reserved granola mixture over the filling. Bake for 15 minutes, or until the topping is slightly browned and the filling is set.
- Transfer the baking pan to a cooling rack. Let cool. Cut into 15 bars.



Recipe: American Heart Association

<https://recipes.heart.org/en/recipes/oat-avocado-berry-breakfast-bars>