



## Enjoy dried fruit, but watch portions

**My husband likes to snack on dried fruit, but he also needs to watch his blood sugar. Should he cut back or even eliminate dried fruit from his diet?**

Dried fruit — at least the kind that's not sweetened with added sugar — is often recommended as a very healthful snack. You do have to watch the portions, but dried fruit is fruit, after all.

However, without knowing the particulars of your husband's diet or health, it's not possible to answer your question specifically. Consult with a registered dietitian or other health professional to get personal guidance.

That said, here's some basic information about dried fruit, just in time for National Raisin Day, April 30:

- According to the U.S. Dietary Guidelines, adults should consume anywhere from 1.5 to 2.5 cups of fruit each day (depending on your recommended calorie intake), but dried fruit is counted double: A quarter-cup of dried fruit equals a half-cup of regular fruit.

- We've come a long way from the time when dried fruit consisted of raisins and prunes. Grocery store shelves now commonly offer a wide variety of dried fruit, including apricots, cranberries, apples, bananas, figs, dates, pineapple, figs, and even peaches, blueberries, cherries, mango and papaya. Be sure to look at the ingredients list for signs of added sugar; most dried fruit is sweet

enough without it.

- Even without added sugar, dried fruit can contain a lot of calories.

In a quarter-cup, raisins, prunes or peaches have about 100 calories; figs have about 90 calories; and dried apricots or bananas have about 80 calories. Dried apples have just about 50 calories per quarter-cup.

- Dried fruit often offers a great source of minerals, particularly iron, copper and potassium. In fact, raisins and prunes are among the best sources of the trace mineral boron, which helps the body use calcium and magnesium.

- Dried fruit is a good source of fiber and is often recommended as a way to combat constipation.

- Unfortunately, the drying process destroys the vitamin C and any heat-sensitive phytonutrients originally contained in the fruit. Make sure not all your fruit intake is from dried fruit.

- Dried fruit is often recommended to help stimulate the appetite for people who are undergoing chemotherapy or who otherwise may have lost their desire to eat.

- Many light-colored dried fruits are treated with sulfites to prevent them from darkening. About 1 percent of the American population, mainly those with asthma, are sensitive to sulfites and need to avoid them. Read the ingredients label.

*Chow Line is a service of Ohio State University Extension and the Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center. Send questions to Chow Line, c/o Martha Filipic, 2021 Coffey Road, Columbus, OH, 43210-1044, or [filipic.3@cfaes.osu.edu](mailto:filipic.3@cfaes.osu.edu).*



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**Editor:**

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