



# Nutrition News

*Feeding the world with knowledge*



December 2015

## Healthy Holiday Travel Snacks

*Healthy Snack Ideas for Holiday Travel Days*



Tis the season of travel! Whether it's by plane, train or automobile, millions of Americans will hit the road to spend the holidays with family and friends. As you pack your suitcase, don't forget the snacks. Long days of travel can be taxing on your body and your mind, and nutritious snacks can provide a boost to energy and mood. Here are a few simple yet satisfying healthy travel snacks to keep you refreshed and ready for days of merriment ahead.

**Banana and Almonds:** This winning combo packs serious nutrition and complementary taste. At 270 calories, a medium banana and one ounce of almonds is a satisfying snack that will keep your energy level high—the pair provides 27% of your daily magnesium, a nutrient needed for enzyme function and energy metabolism. You'll also get 6.5 grams of fiber, 7 grams of protein and 18% of your daily potassium.

**Grapes and Cashews:** At 104 calories per cup, this tasty little fruit contains healthful polyphenols such as quercetin, resveratrol and anthocyanins and has been linked to improvements in heart, brain and bone health. The sweet flavor of grapes pairs perfectly with cashews, a nut that contains over 5 grams of protein, 10% daily iron, 11% daily zinc, and 20% daily magnesium for about 160 calories per ounce. Cashews are especially high in copper (31% daily value), an important nutrient for energy production and brain and nervous system function.

**Carrots and Hummus:** This go-to snack will please both kids and adults. Carrots provide gratifying crunch without the added sodium of chips. Avoiding excess sodium may help prevent headaches, a nuisance no one wants during travel. Carrots also contain vitamin A, a nutrient that supports good eye health and vision. Opt for baby carrots and single-serve hummus containers for the easiest travel option. You can usually find these in rest stops and airports.

**Celery and Peanut Butter:** A tasty duo of crunchy and creamy, celery and peanut butter is a classic snack that will never go out of style. At just 6 calories per medium stalk, go

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## Featured Recipe



- **Crumble Coffee Cake Squares**

ahead and let the whole car crunch away. Check your stores for single serve peanut butter packets to keep portions under control and allow for easy cleanup. Two tablespoons of peanut butter provides 190 calories, 7 grams of protein and 14% of daily magnesium. Look for our new [Premium Celery Hearts](#), an exclusive celery variety to Dole that offers a milder flavor, snappier crunch, and less stringy texture.

**Crumble Coffee Cake Squares:** Have some prep time before your trip? Whip up a batch of our [Crumble Coffee Cake Squares](#), perfect for an on-the-move breakfast or an anytime snack. These hearty squares are made with whole wheat flour and plenty of fruit, including banana, pineapple and berries of your choice. One square provides 25% of daily manganese, a mineral involved in metabolism.

## Painless Pomegranate

*Pomegranate May Reduce Stomach Pain and Inflammation*



Pomegranates are one of the trendiest health foods on the market today, celebrated for their high antioxidant content and potential therapeutic benefits. The fruit has been used for centuries to treat inflammatory diseases, prompting researchers from Mexico, Italy and Spain to explore the science behind pomegranate as a potential remedy for stomach pain and inflammation. Results from the 2015 study are published in the *International Journal of Food Sciences and Nutrition*.

Using extract from whole fruit, researchers tested how the polyphenols in pomegranates may alleviate stomach pain and inflammation in an animal model. Not only was the pomegranate extract effective in reducing pain and inflammation, it worked better than the anti-inflammatory drugs often given to people (indomethacin and diclofenac, both NSAIDs). Pomegranate extract also offered protection to the gastric mucosal barrier, the outer lining of the stomach that prevents stomach acids from leaking to the rest of the body. Anti-inflammatory drugs such as aspirin may actually damage this lining and result in stomach ulcers. The major phytochemicals present were tannins and anthocyanins, but the compounds responsible for the effect cannot be fully determined. Though more research is needed in humans, this study suggests pomegranates may be useful in treating pain and gastric inflammation.

You can find pomegranate seeds (called arils) in your supermarket, or you can remove them from the whole fruit yourself. Using a paring knife, slice the top off the pomegranate and score the skin from the top down to the bottom of the fruit, moving a few times around the fruit. Break apart the pomegranate into several sections and remove the seeds with your hands or by hitting the fruit with a spoon. Enjoy the seeds on their own or sprinkled over yogurt or salads. Our [Butternut Squash with Eggplant-Pomegranate Sauce](#) uses the seeds in two different ways. This delicious salad makes a beautiful addition to your dinner menu this holiday season. Serve this as a hearty side salad or a vegetarian main.

**BONUS:** Researchers from the UK found that pomegranates may be useful for any condition involving inflammation, such as Parkinson's disease, thanks to the polyphenol punicalagin.

## HIIT It!

### *High-Intensity Interval Training May be Perceived as Easier Exercise*



In today's over-scheduled and fast-paced society, it can seem near impossible to squeeze everything into a 24-hour day. The holiday season is no exception, adding party-going, gift-shopping, and house-decorating to the list of to-dos. Exercise can often fall by the wayside when the tasks start piling up, but fitness does not have to be grueling or take several hours from your day. Research published in *Medicine & Science in Sports & Exercise* suggests high-intensity interval training (HIIT) may not only save you time, it may feel easier too.

For the 2015 study, 20 overweight, unfit adults completed four separate exercise sessions on an indoor cycle. The first was a 20-minute, continuous session performed at 50% of maximum work capacity. The other three sessions were 24 minutes total but broken into intervals of 30, 60 or 120 seconds. Exercisers worked at 80% maximum capacity for one interval, followed by a rest interval of the same length. All sessions were equal in terms of calories burned (an estimated 165 calories per session). Before, during and after each session, participants rated their perceived level of effort on a scale of 1 to 10.

Participants not only expected the 30-second interval workout to feel easiest before starting the exercise, shorter intervals felt easier while they were actually exercising. By the end of the sessions, participants rated the 30-second intervals as 4.5 for exertion, while they rated the continuous yet less-intensive exercise as 5.9. The 120-second intervals felt even harder, rated as a 6.8 for difficulty.

If exercising just isn't your thing, high-intensity interval training may be for you. Perception of effort can limit exercise tolerance, so engaging in exercise that feels easier can be motivation to stick with your daily routine. Thirty seconds at high intensity, follow by thirty seconds of rest for 24 minutes was the ideal in this study for the easiest feeling workout. Try this interval routine for running, cycling, jump roping or any other activity that gets you up and moving.

## Berries and Brussels Beat Holiday Bloat

### *Eating Fruits and Vegetables Linked to Weight Loss over Time*



The holidays are notorious for indulgent foods, but season's eatings don't have to end in swells on the scale. You can eat, drink and stay healthy this holiday season by making produce the stars of your meals. Research from Harvard suggests filling your plate with fruit and non-starchy vegetables may be the key to keeping the weight off this December and all year round.

Using data from three large cohort studies comprising nearly 118,000 men and women in the United States, researchers analyzed participants' diets and weights every four years over a period of 24 years. Researchers categorized fruits and vegetables as either high fiber (about 3.7 grams per serving) or low fiber (about 1.2 grams per serving), and as either high or low glycemic load, which is a measurement of how fast blood sugar rises after eating the food.

Analysis showed a link between eating more fruits and vegetables and losing weight. For each additional serving of vegetables people ate every day, they lost an extra 0.25 pound. Higher-fiber, lower-glycemic load vegetables like Brussels sprouts, cauliflower and leafy greens were among the most effective for weight loss. For fruit, each additional daily serving was linked with an extra 0.53 pound lost. Berries, apples and pears showed the greatest effect.

Though one of the benefits of eating fruits and vegetables is that they are lower in calories than most other foods, researchers controlled for caloric intake, meaning some other benefit of fruits and vegetables was responsible for the weight loss. Researchers also controlled for changes in physical activity, smoking status, intakes of other heavy foods, and hours spent sleeping or watching TV, showing the true health potential of eating more fruits and vegetables.

January may be weeks away, but it's never too early to resolve to eat more fruits and vegetables. Aim to fill half your plate with fruits and vegetables at meals, and snack on fresh produce when hunger strikes during the day. At holiday parties, seek out dishes that feature vegetables and fruit as the main components, and at potluck gatherings offer to bring your own fruit or vegetable platter so you know there is a healthy option in the room. Healthy foods don't have to be boring. Serve our beautiful [Holiday Cobb Salad](#) for a dish that will please your guests' eyes, taste buds and waistlines.

## Holiday Break

### *Working Long Overtime Linked with Heart Disease and Stroke*



Though the days of holiday break may have been left behind with school graduation, a few days off work can be a mental relief during the month of December. Research now suggests scaling back on hours at the office may be a relief for your heart too. A 2015 study published in *The Lancet* finds working long overtime hours may increase risk of heart disease and stroke.

European researchers collected data from 25 studies across Europe, the United States and Australia. Each chosen study contained data on weekly hours spent at work and reported incidence of heart disease and stroke via participant follow-up. Analysis showed that people who worked 55 hours or more per week

had a 1.3-times higher risk of stroke than those who worked a standard 35-40 hour week. Working long overtime was also linked to 1.13 times the risk of developing heart disease.

Balancing work and personal life is important during the holidays and year round. Take advantage of the season and spend some time away from work with family and friends. When you are in the office, utilize any workplace wellness opportunities your company has in place to keep your health on track. Dole offers evening fitness classes, afternoon yoga sessions, an onsite gym, a healthy café for breakfast and lunch, and complimentary fruit and vegetable snacks during the day.

**BONUS:** Stay focused at the office by exercising regularly. Research suggests regular exercise may result in better oxygen circulation in the brain and possibly a sharper mind. Better focus may get you out the door on time.

## Ginger All the Way

### *Ginger May Benefit People with Diabetes*



From cookies and cakes to coffee drinks and tea, ginger is the star of the menu this time of year. Though holiday gingerbread cookies can hardly be considered a health food, there may be benefit to adding ginger to other foods in your daily diet. A study from the North Carolina Research Campus, home of the Dole Nutrition Institute Laboratory, found compounds in ginger may help to prevent complications associated with diabetes.

Diabetes can result in an abnormal rise in blood sugar, which can lead to production of reactive sugars called MGOs. These compounds can then bind to proteins and form compounds called AGEs. Buildup of AGEs has been linked to diabetic complications including kidney disease, nerve disorders, cataracts and Alzheimer's disease. Eating ginger may be one way to prevent harmful AGEs from forming.

Researchers from North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University isolated two compounds found in ginger: gingerol found in fresh ginger and shogaol found in dried ginger. They suspected the ginger compounds could prevent the formation of AGEs by binding to and trapping MGOs. Researchers mixed the ginger compounds with MGOs in the lab, and found after just one hour, 80% of the compound was trapped. After six hours, less than 5% of the potentially harmful MGO remained.

Though additional studies will need to be conducted in humans, these results suggest ginger may help prevent development of diabetes-related chronic conditions. "Glycation of protein contributes to the known health complications from diabetes," said Shengmin Sang, PhD, lead author of the study. "Glycation is life threatening far more than high blood sugar itself to diabetic patients." Ginger may be just the food that can help prevent this harmful process.

Utilize ginger in your cooking all year round. Try grating fresh ginger into vegetable stirfrys or even into smoothies. Ginger can also add unique flavor to dressings or sauces. Take a break from heavy holiday indulgences and make our [Grilled Miso Glazed Salmon & Pineapple Ginger Peach Chutney](#) using freshly grated ginger.

# FEATURED RECIPE

## Crumble Coffee Cake Squares

### *Ingredients:*

- 1 cup unsweetened almond milk
- 2 teaspoons apple cider vinegar
- 1- $\frac{1}{4}$  cups unbleached all-purpose flour
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup whole-wheat flour
- 3 teaspoons ground cinnamon, divided
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon salt
- $\frac{1}{3}$  cup plus 3 tablespoons buttery spread, divided
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup cane sugar
- 2 DOLE® Bananas, divided
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 1 cup small diced DOLE Tropical Gold® Pineapple
- 1 cup DOLE Blueberries and Raspberries
- 1 cup rolled oats
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup walnut pieces
- 3 tablespoons packed light brown sugar



*Serves:* 16 Servings

*Prep Time:* 20 minutes

*Cook Time:* 60 minutes

### *Directions:*

1. Preheat oven to 350° Spray 9-inch square baking pan with olive oil cooking spray.
2. Combine almond milk and cider vinegar, set aside for 5 minutes. Combine flours, baking powder, baking soda, 2 teaspoons cinnamon and salt together, set aside.
3. Cream  $\frac{1}{3}$  cup buttery spread with sugar until smooth. Add one banana and vanilla extract to the bowl; continue creaming until smooth. Alternate adding flour mixture and almond milk mixture, scraping the mixing bowl as needed. Transfer the batter to the cake pan, spreading it evenly. Slice the remaining banana and press into batter, with fresh pineapple and berries, set aside.
4. Combine rolled oats, brown sugar, walnuts and cinnamon with remaining 3 tablespoons buttery spread. Spread mixture on top of the batter.
5. Bake 60 minutes or until toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean. Remove from the oven and cool for 20 minutes before cutting the cake into 16 squares (cut 4x4). Cool completely before serving.

# EDITORIAL TEAM

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