



Dole Diet Center

Healthy Easter Decorating Ideas

“Bad for You” Candy is boring! Freshen Up Holiday Tradition with Fruity Easter Decorating Ideas



Like too many over-commercialized “holidays,” Easter has become a pastel, powdered sugar-coated parody of its former self. What once was an occasion to tend to spiritual health has turned into an occasion for excessive consumption, as Americans spend over \$2 billion annually on Easter candy—more than both Christmas and Valentine’s Day combined. What’s good for candy manufacturers is terrible for America’s children, contributing to an obesity epidemic driving rising rates of childhood diabetes, hypertension, joint

problems and increased challenges in school.

It’s not just the 2,000 calories your child will consume in the average Easter basket one year—it’s the years of repeated association between family celebration and sugar overload. But you might be surprised by how easy it can be to break the cycle—and make this Easter truly a time of renewal, redemption, and a healthier new life. Forgo the candy aisle for a trip down the produce aisle, and you’ll find the ingredients you need to make your family’s Easter equally delicious and even more delightful than in years past. We gathered some of the best ideas from our Pinterest peeps and curated them into a Dole Nutrition Easter board. Send us your ideas and we’ll add them to the mix!

Clementine Chicks:

These lil’ guys are sure to leap straight into your little one’s mouth! Simply peel a tangerine, cut the peel to resemble feet, a triangle cut out for the nose, and three small strips for the feathers. Mini marshmallows can serve as “edible eyes” to complete the chick’s face.

Easter Bunny Apple Fruit Snack:

Simply take an apple and cut off the front. Next, decorate a simple face—this example uses jellybeans and marshmallows with chocolate hazelnut spread, but you can experiment with berries and nut spreads. Whiskers can be made from wheatgrass, chives, or other herbs.

Easter Egg Popsicles:

This frozen treat is very simple to create. Poke a hole in the bottom of a plastic Easter egg, fill with your favorite juice, insert a popsicle stick into the hole, and freeze!

Dye your Easter Eggs, Naturally:

Colored eggs are a staple to the Easter holiday. This year, try dyeing them without all the chemicals! Did you know that many dyes can be created using fruits and vegetables?

- Red pomegranate, raspberries, red onion skins, cranberries, and rhubarb
- Orange paprika, carrots, and yellow onions (skins)
- Yellow ground cumin, turmeric, green tea, saffron, chamomile, and carrot top
- Blue blueberries, purple grape juice, and red cabbage leaves
- Indigo/Purple hibiscus tea
- Brown coffee and dill seeds

Hot News



OBESITY RAISES
AUTISM RISK

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Featured Recipe



GOLDEN FRITTATA

An Egg-cellent Lunch:

Turn healthy eats into an Easter adventure by packing fruits and veggies in plastic eggs. Put the “eggs” into an egg carton for this perfect and festive lunchtime surprise!

Bunny Bowls:

Cantaloupe, honeydew, watermelon, all conveniently come in Easter friendly hues. They also come with serving bowls already intact. Here’s a twist on an old fruit decorating standard that puts boring store bought baskets to shame.

Walk On By...

Move Your Feet to Kick Food Cravings



As veteran dieters know, it’s hard to resist temptation when it comes to our favorite treats. For many, women in particular, chocolate is our kryptonite—wearing down even the strongest wills until we succumb to indulgence. Scientists have measured this vulnerability to such sweet enticement in terms they call “attentional bias.” It describes how biased attention focused on one particular object may compromise judgment. Though often unconscious, attentional bias can be countered by deliberate

actions. And when it comes towards a bias for chocolate, new research suggests that moving your feet can help put distance between you and the object of your desire.

In a study recently published in the journal *Appetite*, British researchers used images of chocolate to measure the attentional bias and chocolate cravings of 20 normal weight and 21 overweight women assigned to either rest or 15 minutes of brisk walking on separate days. Compared to resting or “passive” conditions, exercise reduced chocolate cravings by 42.2%, and passive conditions reduced chocolate cravings by 6.3% for the whole group. Chocolate cravings in the exercise group were still significantly lower than the passive group 10 minutes after exercise. And this effect was not different between the normal weight and the overweight group.

Previous research has suggested that the simple act of delaying snacking may reduce the amount of food you eventually consume. It’s also possible that activity in and of itself helps moderate consumption. For example, tensing muscles was found to increase willpower by 140%. Employing chopsticks, though not exactly “heavy lifting,” was found to encourage more mindful eating, as was switching to a non-dominant hand (right-handers eating with their left, or lefties with their right).

Walking also offers many additional benefits; as one study observed seniors who walk may rebuild the aging brain. An hour of brisk walking three times a week can significantly boost aerobic capacity, especially among the elderly. By wearing a pedometer and aiming for 10,000 steps a day you’ll actually end up walking more than you would by simply setting a time goal.

Phosphorus Fears

One-Third at Increased Death Risk Due to Excess Intake



Sodas, prepared frozen foods, meat, dairy. Most Americans consume too much. Such excess drives rising rates of obesity, and all the related health risks. But such dietary patterns have also increased intake of phosphorus, elevated levels of which are linked to increased risk of death from all causes, even among the relatively healthy.

Such is the implication of brand-new research, published in the prestigious *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*. The study analyzed dietary data on 9,686 healthy adults of varying ages (NHANES III) for 12 to 18 years and found that more than a third consumed nearly double the recommended daily allowance of phosphorus (700 mg/day) increasing their risk of “all cause” mortality. The findings are all the more concerning given the fact that levels of phosphorus intake have been on the rise for the past two decades, compounded by “the widespread use of inorganic phosphorus additives in processed food,” according to study co-author Alex Chang, M.D. One big culprit is soda, 1-1/2 cans of which are consumed by the average American daily.

Researchers hypothesize that excessive intake of phosphorus over an extended period may raise levels of hormones that cause the kidneys to excrete more calcium, increasing calcification of blood vessels, enlargement of the heart, weakening of the bones, and kidney disease. It is best to limit less-healthy sources, such as beef, cheese, and dry food mixes. Opt for healthier phosphorus sources like salmon, oatmeal, almonds, and beans – not only do such whole foods supply other needed nutrients (and fewer unneeded calories) they’re less likely to contribute to too much of this mineral since only about 50% of plant-based phosphorus (or phytic acid) is absorbed by the body.

Nutrition News Desk

Obesity Raises Autism Risk

Heaviest Moms Double Odds of Children’s Developmental Disorders



The autism rate in the U.S. has risen to one in 88—up from one in 110 just a few years earlier. The disorder can run the spectrum from mildly impaired social connection, repetitive behavior to virtual isolation from the world. While cures and causes remain elusive, significant research points to one contributing factor that is within our control: Obesity.

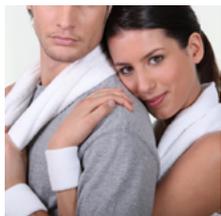
A study published in the journal *Pediatrics* looked at over 1,000 children (two-thirds with autism, one-third without) both genders, ages 2 to 5 years old. When researchers matched these profiles against maternal health history, they found that obese mothers were more than 60% more likely to have a child with autism—and more than twice as likely to have children with developmental disorders, particularly in speech. The study’s authors emphasize that autistic risk may stem from many factors, including older parental age, malnutrition and premature births. But what affects the mother’s body affects the sensitive, developing fetal brain—and the metabolic impact of obesity are manifold, including increased inflammation, blood pressure, blood sugar and hormonal variations.

The autism/obesity link is just the latest in an ever-growing body of research showing that fitter pregnancies benefit both mother and child. Being overweight or obese, for example, increases the risk of gestational diabetes, preeclampsia, congenital malformations and miscarriage. “Eating for two” is one thing, but if that pregnancy diet includes a surfeit of high-fat foods, mothers may alter their offspring’s palate, increasing a later propensity for junk food, and thus a child’s chances of becoming heavy later in life. By contrast,

eating more produce will not only help with pregnancy weight management, but might also lower a woman's chances of giving birth to a child with leukemia. And according to preliminary research coming out of the North Carolina Research Campus, a maternal diet high in choline may increase memory and mental function in offspring over a lifetime. Watch our [Pregnancy Health video](#) to learn more.

Aroused To Exercise

Fewer Sexual Side-Effects of Antidepressants When Women Work Out



As Americans turn increasingly to antidepressants, these mood-modifying medications are in turn taking a toll on sexual satisfaction, particularly for women, who are more than twice as likely to be prescribed such pills as are men. Sexual side effects of antidepressants are nearly universal among women, with a whopping 96% of those medicated reporting various symptoms, which not only interfere with intimacy, but also may complicate compliance. Fortunately, new research suggests a cheap and

healthful remedy: Exercise.

In a study published in the journal *Depression and Anxiety*, Indiana University and University of Texas at Austin researchers engineered an interesting experiment to build on previously promising lab findings. Researchers recruited 52 women reporting some antidepressant attributed sexual side effects. These subjects were divided into two groups: One group was to schedule 30 minutes of exercise immediately prior to sexual activity—the other group also exercised, but postponed sex for at least six hours after working out. After three weeks, the two groups switched routines. Outcomes were measured against a previous three-week no-exercise “baseline.” The results? Overall, exercise improved sexual desire and function. While pre-sex exercise conferred an added advantage, the greatest difference existed between exercise and no-exercise.

How much exercise is needed? The authors suggest that a half-hour vigorous workout at least three days a week should be sufficient to produce improvements, though other research suggests working out 4 to 5 days a week is linked to greater sexual self-confidence. While study subjects employed an aerobic-strength training combo, yoga has been shown to significantly improve mood scores. Whether stretching or strengthening, cycling or surfing, regular exercise is key to maintaining a healthy weight—which in turn helps support a healthy sex life: Only 5% of the normal-weight population report lack of desire, lack of enjoyment, and performance difficulties, compared to nearly two-thirds of the obese population. Moreover, the medicine cabinet isn't the only resource for better balancing your emotions. What you eat can significantly affect how you feel. Four feel-better foods to include in your diet:

Oysters — a top source of zinc, which preliminary research has linked to reduced hostility and depression. Other zinc sources include crab, lobster, lentils and white beans.

Pineapple — in addition to looking cheery, this tropical treasure is loaded with vitamin C, linked to reduced mood disturbances. Other top C sources: kiwis, red bell pepper, broccoli, papaya.

Spinach — high in folate, which was found to be disproportionately deficient in many individuals recovering from depression. Folate is also found in beans, beets, artichokes and Brussels sprouts.

Sardines — vitamin D comes not just from the bright sun, but also from the deep sea, in sardines. Research has linked lower levels of vitamin D with increased feelings of loneliness and listlessness.

Weekly Yo-Yos Win Weight-Loss Game

Weekend Partier? Pay Weekday Penance...



Did you ever have one of those days when you just “feel fat”? Blame it on the mirror, on your mood... or maybe blame it on Monday! Indeed, new research shows that most of us have distinct weight cycles—our weight rises over the weekend and tends to fall over the course of the week. This may not be much of a surprise, given the more leisurely pace and indulgent meals enjoyed over the weekend. But what was noteworthy was how a stronger weekday compensating pattern—how quickly and consistently individuals reversed gear by eating less after

weekend excess—was the best predictor of longer-term weight management success.

The paper published in a recent issue of *Obesity Facts* analyzed data from four previous studies involving 80 subjects to explore differences in self-monitored weight measurements between those who lost, maintained, or gained weight over the course of the respective investigations. Those categorized as relative weight losers (down 3%) were roughly 60% more likely to peak on Sunday/Monday and bottom out on Friday/Saturday. By contrast, relative weight gainers (up 1%) did not share this pattern of peaks and valleys, but fluctuated more evenly over the course of the week. In other words, “yo-yo dieting”—at least over the course of a week—was associated with better longer-term weight-loss results.

While being a “yo-yo” certainly is a “no-no” if taken to extremes—i.e., starving then binging—it can be leveraged for healthy weight management if you forgive yourself for mistakes and recommit to healthier dietary choices. This means filling up on high-fiber, high-water content fruit and vegetables, and incorporating hunger “speed bumps” like large, low-calorie salads and soups. Research indicates that women who eat a salad before the rest of their meal end up consuming one hundred fewer total calories.

So, what’s the best way to ensure that weekly ups and downs align with your longer-term health goals? A simple, cost-effective way is to connect the dots—literally! Get yourself a sheet of graph paper, then mark your weight on a daily basis, plotting a line through entries to make a chart. Research shows that this self-monitoring tool really works in helping you self-correct week by week, to keep you on the lifelong, long life straight and narrow!

Featured Recipe

Golden Frittata

Ingredients

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 3 small DOLE® Russet Potatoes (about 12 ounces), chopped
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1/2 cup chopped DOLE Red Bell Pepper
- 1/2 cup chopped DOLE Red Onion
- 2 cups chopped DOLE Broccoli
- 2 cups liquid egg whites
- 1/4 teaspoon ground turmeric



Serves: 4

Total Time: 30 min.

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 350°F.
2. Heat the olive oil in a 10" non-stick, ovenproof skillet over medium-high heat. Add the potatoes, salt and pepper. Cook for 5 minutes until potatoes are beginning to brown. Add the bell pepper and onion; cook for 2 minutes longer. Add the broccoli and remove from heat.
3. Combine the egg white and turmeric in a bowl. Pour over the vegetable mixture. Give the pan a few good shakes to ensure egg mixture settles over the bottom of the pan. Bake for 20 minutes until set in the center. Slide frittata onto a serving plate and serve warm or at room temperature.

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