



## National Apricot Day

Considering it is National Apricot Day on January 9<sup>th</sup> let us turn our attention to the small, tasty, golden fruit that originated in China. Do not let the tiny size and velvety skin fool you! Apricots are jammed packed with ample doses of essential vitamins, as well as are low in fat and calories. More specifically, this fruit is rich in Vitamin A, Vitamin C, Vitamin K, Vitamin E, Niacin, and polyphenolic antioxidants. A single apricot will provide you with 4-5 grams from a type of flavonoid called catechins. Catechins are potent anti-inflammatory nutrients that help in decreasing inflammation throughout the entire body including the blood vessels, ultimately leading to better blood pressure control. Additionally, apricots are an excellent source of copper, magnesium, potassium and dietary fiber.



### Tips for Picking Apricots

- **Fresh:** Try to find them during late spring and through the summer when they are in season. Choose apricots that are golden in color, plump and are not bruised or shriveled, as well as let off a sweet fragrance.
- **Dried:** Try to find dried apricots that do not have added sugars or other ingredients and are simply pure dried apricots because they are already higher in sugar.

**How to Eat?** Enjoy fresh, cut up and put on a salad, grill on the BBQ, cook into a pastry, dried, or as jam.

### Health Benefits:

- Aids with constipation due to being high in fiber and having laxative properties
- Bone health
- Heart health
- Skin issues
- Aids in treating cancer and asthma
- Help maintain healthy balance of electrolytes, and fluid function
- Good for eyesight

### Health Tip:

One healthy behavior that is great to start implementing this New Year is eating more fruit! Research has linked regular intake of 3 or more servings of fruit a day to decreasing the risk of vision loss, heart disease, cancer, and other health related ailments and diseases. Three servings of fruit may sound like a lot to eat every day, but simply adding a fresh apricot as snack, putting some dried apricot in your trail mix, a banana in your morning smoothie and fresh berries on your green salad, you have reached this daily goal. Find your favorite fruits and get creative!



## Exercise of the Month

It is now January, post holidays and the time that is filled with New Year resolutions. One resolution most people have is the desire to make exercise a priority. Even if that is at the top of a person's list, it is still hard to find the time

amidst busy lives. Therefore, HIIT training is the perfect solution for fitting in quick and very effective workouts into your schedule this New Year. These fast paced High Intensity Interval Training workouts are shown to torch calories in a short amount of time, so that you do not need to spend hours in the gym.

Begin by warming up so that you bring blood flow and circulation throughout the body, to get the most out of your workout and prevent any injury. After you feel warm, you are now ready to HIIT it!

Perform each exercise listed below for 45 seconds of work followed by 15 seconds of rest. Repeat for a total of 3 rounds, which will add up to a 20-minute workout.

1. Mountain climbers
2. Squats (or higher intensity squat jumps)
3. Shoulder taps (alternating shoulders)
4. Jumping jacks
5. Tricep dips

## Recipe of the Month

### Apricot and Almond No-Bake Energy Balls

Looking for a quick and easy recipe for a snack on the go? These energy balls are perfect because they are a filling and nutrient dense snack that you can make in minutes!

**Total Time:** 15 Minutes

**Serves:** Approximately 18 balls

#### Ingredients:

- ¼ C. Whole dried raw almonds
- ¼ C. Dried apricots
- 2 tsp. Lemon juice
- 1 tsp. Vanilla extract
- 1 tsp. Cinnamon
- ¼ C. Honey
- ½ C. Almond butter
- 1 ½ C. Rolled oats

#### Instructions:

1. In a food processor, pulse the almonds until broken down into fine crumbs. As well as the dried apricots until it forms a sticky paste (You might need to cut the apricots into smaller pieces before processing).
2. In a mixing bowl (or in the food processor), gently stir together the blended paste, lemon juice, vanilla extract, ground cinnamon, honey, and almond butter until combined. Add the rolled oats and stir together until thoroughly mixed.
3. Roll the mixture into balls, and place on a cookie sheet covered in wax paper. Put in the freezer so that the balls can harden. Store in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to seven days, or in the freezer for a few weeks. Enjoy!



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