

Tasty Ways to Your Heart

FAMILY FEATURES

Valentine's Day naturally brings thoughts of hearts, flowers, sweetness and love. But did you know that it also falls during American Heart Month? A perfect time to start taking care of your heart and the hearts of the ones you love.

You might think that a heart-healthy diet is boring or flavorless. Actually, eating for your heart can add a lot of flavor, and some of it may come from surprising sources — such as watermelon.

Eating watermelon can help maintain cardiovascular health. That's because the amino acid called citrulline in watermelon increases free arginine which helps maintain blood flow, the arteries, and overall cardiovascular function.

To get more scrumptious recipes like these, and to learn more about the heart benefits of watermelon, visit www.watermelon.org.



Watermelon Oat Crumble



Grilled Scallops and Watermelon Mini Kebabs



Watermelon S'mores



Use heart-shaped and circular cookie cutters to shape a variety of watermelon treats.

Watermelon Oat Crumble

Serves 6 to 8

- 2 cups rolled or quick cook oats
- 1/2 cup light brown sugar
- 1/8 cup honey
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1 cup chopped pecans
- 6 cups watermelon balls

Toss the oats, sugar, honey, cinnamon and pecans until mixed well. Spread into an even layer on a parchment paper-lined cookie sheet. Bake in pre-heated 300°F oven until golden brown. Turn off oven leaving the tray in for an additional 10 to 15 minutes. Remove and cool. Break into crumbles. Arrange the watermelon balls in 6 to 8 small bowls or wide stemmed glasses and top with the oat crumble.

Watermelon S'mores

Serves 4

- 1 cup graham cracker crumbs
- 1/2 cup melted dark chocolate chips
- 4 2 x 4 x 1-inch-thick rectangles of seedless watermelon
- 1 cup mini marshmallows

Sprinkle the graham cracker crumbs over the center of 4 plates. Drizzle 1/3 of the dark chocolate over the crumbs. Place a watermelon rectangle over the crumbs and chocolate on each plate. Drizzle 1/3 of the dark chocolate over the watermelon. Sprinkle the marshmallows over the watermelon and drizzle the remaining chocolate over the marshmallows.

Grilled Scallops and Watermelon Mini Kebabs

- 12 sea scallops
- 4 cups boiling vegetable or chicken broth
- 24 1 x 1-inch watermelon cubes
- 1/4 cup soy sauce
- 1 tablespoon sesame oil
- 1 tablespoon minced garlic
- 1 tablespoon fresh minced ginger

Cut the scallops into halves across the diameter to create half-moon shapes. Place them in a heatproof casserole dish in a single layer. Pour the boiling clear broth over the scallops and let them poach for 5 minutes. Drain and cool the scallops. On each skewer alternate 1 half-moon scallop, then 2 watermelon cubes, then another half-moon scallop. Mix together the soy sauce, sesame oil, garlic and ginger and brush the kebabs as they are grilled over a medium hot grill for about 90 seconds per side turning once. Serve warm. Serves 12 as an appetizer.

Heart-Healthy Eating Plan

The DASH eating plan (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension) is a highly recommended diet that has been proven to lower blood pressure. It's been endorsed by:

- The National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (one of the National Institutes of Health, of the US Department of Health and Human Services)
- The American Heart Association
- The Dietary Guidelines for Americans
- US guidelines for treatment of high blood pressure

And new research has shown that following the DASH diet over time will reduce the risk of stroke and heart disease, as well as kidney stones. The benefits of the DASH diet have also been seen in teens with hypertension.

Learn more at www.dashdiet.org.

Watermelon season is roughly May through October. But you can enjoy delicious imported watermelon all year round.