Prunes in Orange Sauce

Who would think you could get omega-3 fatty acids from a prune recipe! It is a great breakfast dish served alone or over oatmeal or polenta. It also makes a great dessert; serve it warm over frozen vanilla yogurt and enjoy!

Prep and Cook Time: 20 minutes
1 cup orange juice, preferably fresh squeezed
1 TBS fresh lemon juice
1 tsp grated or minced lemon zest
1/4 cup honey
1/2 tsp cinnamon
1/4 cup chopped walnuts
24 pitted prunes

Combine orange and lemon juice, lemon zest, honey, and cinnamon in a medium sized saucepan. Bring to a simmer on high heat and add prunes. Turn the heat as low as possible and cover. Simmer gently for only about 10 minutes. Keep an eye on them so prunes don't get soggy. Add chopped walnuts and cook for another couple of minutes. Remove prunes with a slotted spoon and turn the heat to medium-high; reduce the liquid to about half. Pour the syrup over the prunes and chill or serve warm.
Should I be concerned about drinking coffee?

My one word answer to this coffee question would be: yes. I think you should be concerned about drinking coffee—but perhaps for some different reasons that you might expect. Few research studies have found direct links between coffee and disease; based on this type of research, coffee appears to be in a different category than saturated fat, or alcohol.

But virtually all research studies show definite impacts of coffee on metabolism and on overall body function. In many sports events, for example, caffeine-containing beverages—including coffee—are disallowed 24 hours prior to certain events. Why? Because the caffeine in coffee is chemically classified as a methylxanthine, and methylxanthines are chemical substances that can act as phosphodiesterase inhibitors (substances that block the activity of the phosphodiesterase enzyme), and when they do, they shift the body away from sugar as a source of fuel and toward fat as a fuel source instead.

For certain athletic events, this shift from sugar to fat would give the athlete an unfair advantage and so coffee and caffeine are disallowed. Does this set of events mean coffee is bad for the average non-athlete? No, but it does mean that the caffeine in coffee affects your metabolism at a fundamental level. Coffee—again, largely thanks to its caffeine—is also a diuretic, and unless accompanied by increased water intake, can be dehydrating. Is this bad? Yes. Keeping optimal water balance in the body is essential for health.

One of the most problematic aspects of coffee, however, is its ability to make a person feel awake, alert, and ready to go—even when that person's body might be exhausted, drowsy, and in need of rest and sleep. The caffeine in coffee can provide a false feeling of vitality—the exact opposite of the World's Healthiest Foods. These foods provide real vitality, complete with conventional nutrients, phytonutrients, and the wisdom of the earth that produced them.

Finally, what about decaf? Organically grown, water-decaffeinated coffee is the best choice here, since other methods of decaffeination often result in the addition of small amounts of toxic substances to the beverage. But unless it is simply the taste and aroma of coffee that are desired, why not experiment with other hot beverages
from the cornucopia of herbal teas that most cultures include in their traditional cuisines and that provide the nutrients and phytonutrients that are characteristic of the World's Healthiest Foods?
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