EASY PEACH COBBLER

In looking to improve the overall nutrition content of your diet, the initial urge might be to remove all sweets. This is not necessary. No food is inherently bad. Moderation helps, as does balancing those indulgences with the rest of your diet. Building a healthy eating pattern means your diet should be mostly made up with a variety of nutrient-dense foods in order to promote optimal nourishment of your body while fitting into your lifestyle. However, there is more to life than just nourishing the body.

For a diet to be considered a healthy eating pattern it should also nourish your mind and spirit. Your diet should achieve balance in your lifestyle while aiming to maintain optimal metabolic health, weight, and performance. This means, that within reason and overall caloric balance, sweet treats can be enjoyed.

In fact, you would be hard pressed to find any licensed medical professional or registered dietitian to advise the general public that all sweet treats are off limits. The Dietary Guidelines for Americans doesn't ban sweets. The guidance is to limit them as described above.

As a means to keep your nutritional goals on track, ideally sweet treats should be made at home. This is because the quality of the ingredients can be controlled, along with decreasing the number of additives and preservatives. In addition, you have the control of changing up ingredients from unhealthy fats to healthy fats, refined flour to whole grain flour, and using less sugar. This, in a sense allows you to even make your sweet treats have a higher nutritional quality.

As a challenge for this week, look to products with no added sugar. "No added sugar" as defined by the FDA means that the product cannot be processed with any sugar or sugar-containing ingredients, though it can have sugar alcohol or artificial sweeteners. It also means that they can contain naturally occurring sugar like fruit. By using things like fruit with naturally occurring sugars, you are increasing the quality of nutrition for that product. The Nutrition Facts label will display the number of added sugars in a product and this is a good exercise in getting familiar with reading the labels.

This recipe uses some of the substitutions listed above to make it more nutritionally dense by including avocado, unsweetened applesauce, whole wheat or oat flour, and using the juice of the canned, no sugar added peaches.

MACROS / SERVING SIZE:
Protein 3 g | Fat 3 g | Carbs 23 g

% CALORIES OF MACROS / SERVING SIZE:
Calories 125 | Protein 9 % | Fat 22 % | Carbs 69 %

NUTRIENT / SERVING SIZE:
Fiber 3 g | Sodium 28 mg | Sat. Fat 1 g

INGREDIENTS (Serves 8)
- 2/3 cup ripe avocado, mashed
- 1/4 cup unsweetened applesauce
- 1/4 cup granulated sugar
- 1 cup whole wheat or oat flour
- 1/2 cup nonfat milk
- 1/2 tsp. vanilla extract (optional)
- 1 tbsp. and 1 tsp. baking powder
- 1/4 tsp. nutmeg
- 1/2 tsp. cinnamon
- 3 cups canned sliced peaches, in their own juice and no sugar added
- 1/2 cup of the canned peach juice, reserved and divided

DIRECTIONS:
1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F.
2. In a medium-sized mixing bowl, combine the first 8 ingredients and use a fork to stir just until they are combined. Do not over mix.
3. Pour 1/4 cup of the reserved juice in a 9 inch baking pan. Add the peaches and sprinkle the cinnamon on top of the peaches.
4. Top the peaches with the flour mixture and gently spread to evenly distribute. Pour the remaining reserved juice on top of the flour mixture. Do not mix the juice into the topping.
5. Place the cobbler pan in the oven and bake for 40-45 minutes.

DIETITIAN TIP
Naturally occurring sugars in fruits and dairy products are not "added sugars". Carbohydrates are not "added sugars". Look at the Nutrition Facts Panel on the packaging, and look for the term "added sugars" and pay attention to the ingredients list for all the different names, "added sugars" are called.

A list of recipes on commissaries.com/healthy living also has nutrition education.