

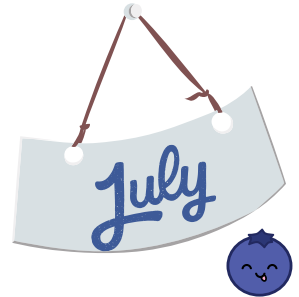


ELITE

Personal Training and Fitness Solutions

HEALTH TOPIC OF THE WEEK

7/3 - National Blueberry Month



Introduction

July is National Blueberry Month, so you know we had to dedicate our first health topic to these little blue beauties. Blueberries are such a significant part of American agriculture that we even have a National American Blueberry Council! Blueberries are native to North America. They grow in 35 out of 50 states. July is the peak season to harvest blueberries, which makes it fitting to celebrate them this month. Several species, including highbush (the most popular) lowbush (wild), rabbiteye, and half-high, grow across the country. Take advantage of the summer months when blueberries are plentiful.

Benefits

- A serving of blueberries has about 80 calories and is bursting with vitamins, minerals, fiber, antioxidants, and phytonutrients. Phytonutrients, also known as phytochemicals, are natural compounds found in all plant foods. Benefits of phytonutrients include removing toxins, reducing inflammation, providing immune support, and aiding cognitive function.
- The fruit's blue color, which ranges from deep purple to blue-black, comes from a phytonutrient called anthocyanin. Anthocyanin attacks cancer-causing free radicals in the body. Cancer prevention is huge. You get this same benefit from eating all colors of fruits and vegetables!
- Research published in the *Journal of the International Society of Sports Nutrition* notes that blueberries may enhance exercise performance and recovery.
- Researchers are also currently pursuing 4 major tracks to better understand the role that blueberries play in promoting good health. These areas include insulin response, brain health, cardiovascular health and cancer risk reduction.



Elite Personal Training and Fitness Solutions does not provide medical treatment or intervention. We acknowledge scientific evidence that appropriately intensive exercise and sustainable nutritional intervention can have significant impact on chronic health disorders and obesity, dramatically improving symptoms when recommendations are followed. Please visit us at Eliteptf.com for more information and to schedule your evaluation.

Ways to Celebrate National Blueberry Month

Make a tasty recipe with blueberries

- Add to smoothies, salads, yogurt, toast, rice cakes, sandwiches, etc.
- Make your own jelly, jam or preserves. Jelly is made with strained fruit juice. Jam is made with mashed fruit. Preserves have whole fruit or large pieces of fruit.
- Heating reduces anthocyanin content, so fresh blueberries will always have more nutritional integrity. Nevertheless, cooked blueberries are still a healthier food source than cookies.
- No recipes? No worries. Enjoy blueberries on their own as a quick & nutritious treat or freeze them for a crunchier texture.



Plant blueberries in your home garden

- Organic and picked right from the source are always best.
- Make sure to plant where there is full sun and slightly acidic soil.
- The best highbush cultivars for Northeastern PA are 'Blueray' and 'Bluecrop'.
- Be patient. Blueberry plants grow slowly. Plants won't have much fruit the first 2 to 3 years, but the harvest gets big after that.



Explore a blueberry farm

- What's better than knowing exactly where your blueberries came from!
- Blueberries grow best in lots of sun. Slather on the sunscreen, wear a hat and keep a water bottle handy!
- Juicy blueberries practically guarantee that you'll walk away with stained fingers and clothes. Bust out your oldest t-shirts and jeans so you can pick them worry free!



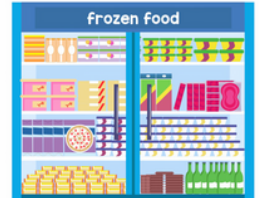
Picking and Storing Blueberries

- Buy in season or organic. Commercial blueberry crops are often heavily sprayed.
- Look for dark blue. The deeper the color, the richer the antioxidants, vitamins and minerals.
- The white powder seen on blueberries is actually a sign of freshness. That white sheen (called the bloom) is the blueberry's natural protection against the sun. If you can see it, it means the berries have been picked in nice, dry conditions.



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- Select frozen if blueberries aren't in season or organic. Look for products labeled IQF (Individually Quick Frozen). You can check this on the package or the manufacturer's website. IQF means the foods are chilled rapidly with pieces separated from each other. This method of freezing preserves nutritional integrity and maintains quality, taste and texture when thawed. · To read more about the benefits of frozen foods, check out our [2/27 health topic \(2/27 - Frozen foods \(Clients\) \(elitepersonaltrainingandfitnessolutions.com\)\)](https://www.elitepersonaltrainingandfitnessolutions.com/2/27-Frozen-foods-Clients)
- Rinse right before eating, but not before storing in the refrigerator. Keep refrigerated for up to 10 days or store in the freezer for up to 10 months.



Blueberry Supplementation

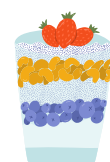
- Blueberry extract is made from concentrated blueberry juice. The juicing process removes most of the fibers and nutrients from the fruit pulp, skin, and seeds. Only what nutrients are left in the juice are preserved. There's also an additional process involved in the making of extracts, which includes adding other ingredients such as preservatives, fillers, and sweeteners.
- Blueberry powder comes from freeze-dried blueberries which are then finely ground to make a powder. Blueberry powder is superior because it is made from the skin, flesh, and seeds of the blueberry fruit. Freeze-dried blueberry powder contains the same nutritional value and vitamins as fresh blueberries. Consuming 5.5 grams translates to approximately 60 g of fresh blueberries.
- The purpose of supplements is to make up for deficiencies in your diet. They are not magic bullets. However, for people who struggle to consume enough fruits and vegetables, a blueberry supplement can be an option. Questions? Speak to our Nutrition Team.



Easy Tips For Adding Blueberries

Fresh blueberries are a great topping for:

- oatmeal
- pancakes
- French toast
- waffles
- cereal
- yogurt
- chia pudding
- rice cakes
- salads
- beverages



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- Add them as a topping or used in homemade baked goods such as pies, tarts, or muffins.
- Savor that slushy consistency. Add frozen blueberries or blueberry-based ice cubes instead of plain ice to smoothies and shakes.



EPT Recipes

Blueberry Yogurt Bark

Ingredients

- 2 cups of Greek yogurt
- ½ cup of fresh or frozen blueberries
- ⅓ cup of your choice of nuts or seeds (optional)
 - Pistachios
 - Pumpkin seeds
 - Chia seeds
- 1 tbs. of honey



Directions

- Use a baking dish or pan and line it with parchment paper.
- Spread the Greek yogurt across the paper evenly. Drizzle honey and lightly mix it in with a utensil.
- Then sprinkle the blueberries and your preference of nuts/seeds on top.
- Finally, place the dish in the freezer. Freeze overnight or until frozen for a quick snack.
- Break the bark into bite-sized pieces and enjoy.

High-Fiber Blueberry Oatmeal Recipe

Ingredients

- ½ cup of fresh blueberries
- 1 packet of Quaker high-fiber instant oatmeal
- Add a drizzle of honey or maple syrup (optional)
- ½-1 tbs. of chia seeds
- ½ cup of water or milk
- ¼ cup of nuts or seeds mixture (optional)
 - Pistachios
 - Walnuts
 - Almonds
 - Cashews
 - Pumpkin seeds
 - Sunflower seeds
 - Flax seeds
 - Hemp seeds



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Directions

- In a bowl, combine packet of instant oatmeal, chia seeds, and water or milk.
- Stir and microwave for 60s.
- Stir again. Top with fresh blueberries and your nuts/seeds mixture.
- Enjoy!



This article was contributed by Amy Kha BS, NASM-CPT, Pn1, CFNP. For her bio, please see <https://www.elitepersonaltrainingandfitnesssolutions.com/amy-kha>

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