

• If you soak a few dates in water and chew on them daily, your digestive system will function better. It's recommended for those who have trouble with constipation.

• The vitamin C and D works on your skin's elasticity and also keeps your skin smooth. If you suffer from skin problems, incorporating dates into your diet might help you in the long run. Dates also come with anti-aging benefits, and prevent the accumulation of melanin in your body.

• The sugar, proteins, and other vitamins in fruit helps in weight gain, especially when you need it.

### COOKING WITH DATES

Dates are best eaten by themselves. The sweet fruit makes for an excellent breakfast snack, or in cereals and porridge. Plenty of people have even switched to date syrup instead of sugar. Jaggery made from date palm tastes delicious. Dried dates can be added to cake, bread and other dishes. Keep a box of seeded or seedless dates in your refrigerator, and make sure to have a few every day. It will also prevent from overeating.

### DATE SMOOTHIE

#### Ingredients

1 cup unsweetened almond milk or regular milk  
8 deseeded dates  
2 bananas  
½ cup ice cube  
¼ tsp vanilla extract  
¼ tsp cinnamon

#### Method

In a blender, combine the almond milk, dates, banana, cinnamon, vanilla, and ice. Blend everything together well until the dates are in tiny pieces and every-

¼ tsp nutmeg powder

#### Method

Coarsely grind dates in a mixer and transfer into a bowl. Coarsely grind cashew nuts, almond and pistachio. Heat ghee in a pan. Add ground dry fruits and poppy seeds, and sauté for a few minutes. Add date and mix well. Sauté till dates are heated through. Remove into a plate and set aside to cool slightly. Add green cardamom and nutmeg powder. Mix everything well. Divide the mixture into equal portions and shape them into laddoos. Cool completely and store in an airtight container.

### APPLE, BANANA AND DATE SALAD

#### Ingredients

2 cups apple, cubed  
½ sliced banana  
½ cup dates, chopped  
¼ cup raisins and walnuts

#### For dressing—

¼ cup pineapple juice  
¼ tsp lemon rind  
½ tsp lemon juice  
¼ tsp mustard powder  
1 tsp powdered sugar  
Salt, to taste  
¼ tsp black pepper

#### Method

In a small jar, combine the ingredients for dressing. Tightly cover and shake hard to mix well. Combine the salad and dressing in a bowl, and toss to coat well. Serve immediately.

### DRY DATES HALWA

#### Ingredients

1 cup dry dates, deseeded  
4 cups full fat milk  
3 tbsp ghee  
¼ tsp cardamom powder  
A pinch of nutmeg powder



thing is smooth, and put in the refrigerator. Serve chilled.

### DATE AND NUTS LADDOO

#### Ingredients

½ kg dates, deseeded and chopped  
¼ cup almond  
¼ cup pistachio  
¼ cup cashew nuts  
1 tbsp poppy seeds  
½ tsp green cardamom powder  
2 tbsp ghee

2 tbsp almonds, blanched and sliced  
2 tbsp pistachio slivers

#### Method

Combine the dry dates and sufficient water in a bowl. Cover and keep aside for 1 hour. Drain, and blend in a mixture till coarse without using any water, and keep aside. Heat the milk in a deep non-stick pan for 10 minutes on high flame, while stirring occasionally. Add the dry dates mixture, mix well and cook on a medium flame for 25 minutes, while stirring occasionally and

scrapping the sides of the pan. Add ghee and sugar, mix well and cook on medium flame for 3 minutes. Switch off the flame, add the cardamom powder, nutmeg powder, almonds and pistachios and mix well. Garnish with almonds and pistachios, and serve hot.

### DATES AND OATS CUPCAKES

#### Ingredients

16 dates, deseeded  
½ cup almonds  
½ cup oats  
1½ cup whole milk  
½ cup salted butter  
1 tsp baking powder  
½ cup sugar  
2/3 cup wheat flour  
Chocolate chips  
Cupcake liners

#### Method

Take a date, almond, and oats in a bowl and add milk to it. Heat it for a few minutes till the milk is warm (microwave for 2 minutes). Grind to a smooth paste (does not have to be too smooth). Now add melted butter and milk. Then add sugar, baking powder, flour, and mix well. Line the cupcake pan with liners and fill them to about ¾. Top with chocolate chips. Preheat oven at 160° C for 10 minutes. Bake for 20 minutes or till a toothpick inserted in the centre comes out clean. Serve or store in an air tight container.

### DATE ROLLS

#### Ingredients

1 cup dates, deseeded and finely chopped  
1 tbsp almonds, chopped  
1 tbsp pistachio  
1 tbsp walnuts  
2 tbsp sesame seeds

#### Method

Heat the ghee in a small non-stick pan, add the dates and cook on low flame, while stirring continuously for 5 to 7 minutes, or till they turn into a soft lump. Remove from the flame, add the almonds, pistachio and walnuts and mix well. Divide the mixture into 6 equal portions and shape each portion into a roll. Coat each roll evenly with sesame seeds and refrigerate to set. Serve chilled.



Photo: Collected