

**Title:**

Healthy Food And Lifestyle Choices Alleviate Digestive Health Problems.  
Nutrient-Packed And Flavorful California Dried Plums Are A Smart Snack

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495

**Summary:**

Digestive problems are on the rise and affecting Americans' lifestyles. The good news is that people may not have to skip work or miss out on leisure activities because of poor digestive health.

**Keywords:**

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Nutrient-Packed And Flavorful California Dried Plums Are A Smart Snack And Tasty Addition To Any Meal

**Article Body:**

Digestive problems are on the rise and affecting Americans' lifestyles. According to the American Gastroenterological Association (AGA), Americans report more than 81 million cases of chronic digestive problems each year.

The good news is that people may not have to skip work or miss out on leisure activities because of poor digestive health.

"Eating a wide variety of nutrient-rich and colorful fruits and vegetables, which are beneficial to your digestive tract, is the first step. This includes dried fruits, like California dried plums, as well as fresh berries and apples," says Leo Treyzon, M.D., from the divisions of Digestive Diseases and Clinical Nutrition at the University of California, Los Angeles. "These types of foods are loaded with essential vitamins and minerals that provide a broad array of health benefits. Other foods containing fiber, protein, calcium and vitamin D are also good choices for enhancing your digestive health."

Treyzon says California dried plums are particularly good for digestive health because they have a unique combination of nutrients, such as soluble and insoluble dietary fiber, potassium and magnesium. They are also high in plant substances called polyphenols, which are strong antioxidants that protect DNA against damage, decrease inflammation and prevent cancer.

Treyzon emphasizes that as people learn more about which types of food improve

their digestive health they'll also realize the positive impact nutrition has on lifestyle and overall health. He added that good digestive health improves one's immune system and may reduce the risk for some chronic diseases, such as heart disease and some forms of cancer.

"As you make positive food choices, remember that it's important to eat adequate amounts of protein, especially vegetable protein," notes Treyzon. "I would also choose fats wisely, avoid concentrated sweets, drink plenty of fluids and engage in enjoyable physical activities for at least 30 minutes a day."

California dried plums are a convenient, healthy snack that fits into today's busy lifestyle. They also are a tasty addition to any meal. Here's a healthful and delicious recipe idea:

#### Chicken Sauté With Balsamic-Dried Plum Sauce

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cook time: 25 minutes

2 tablespoons olive oil

4 boneless skinless chicken breast halves (about 1 1/2 pounds)

1/2 teaspoon salt

1/4 teaspoon pepper

1/2 cup finely chopped shallots

2 cloves garlic, minced

1 cup low-sodium chicken broth

1/2 cup (about 3 ounces) coarsely chopped California pitted dried plums

1/3 cup balsamic vinegar

1/2 teaspoon dried thyme leaves, crushed

In large skillet, heat oil over medium heat until hot. Season chicken with salt and pepper. Place chicken in skillet; cook 10 minutes or until browned and centers are no longer pink, turning once. Transfer to serving platter; keep

warm. Add shallots and garlic to same skillet; cook and stir 3 to 5 minutes or until softened. Stir in broth, dried plums, vinegar, thyme, 1/2 teaspoon salt and 1/4 teaspoon pepper; bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce heat slightly; cook until sauce is reduced to about 1 cup. Spoon over chicken.

Makes 4 servings.

Nutrition Information Per Serving: 345 calories; 24% calories from fat; 9 g fat; 139 mg sodium; 22 g carbohydrate; 42 g protein; 99 mg cholesterol; 1 g fiber