

Pointers For Parents

Win Over Tricky Toddler Palates With Canned Pears

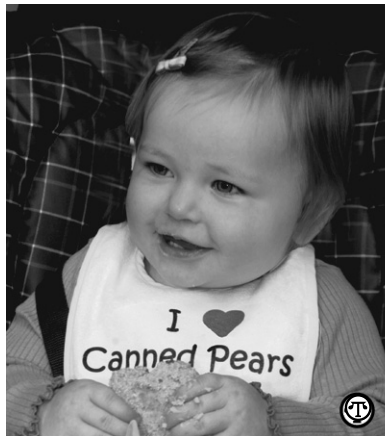
(NAPSA)—With constant exposure to candy, chips and other goodies, finding foods toddlers like to eat that are also healthy is a challenge. Recently updated dietary guidelines call for a diet with more fruits and veggies—making it even more important to control tots' eating regimens.

Sweet, juicy and delicious canned pears are a convenient, healthy fruit that can help satisfy even the trickiest of toddler taste buds. After all, the sooner good habits are formed for healthier eating, the better.

Pantry staples like canned Bartlett pears from the Pacific Northwest make a perfect base for homemade toddler food. Pears retain their nutrients throughout the canning process. Since they are soft, they are easy to chew and digest. Canned pears contain no fat or cholesterol, are a great source of potassium and fiber and provide the "good" carbohydrates that help toddlers grow.

The Pacific Northwest Canned Pear Service conducted a chef recipe contest to create new, healthy and easy-to-prepare toddler foods. The winner was chosen by a panel of "toddler judges," and Diane O'Brien of Sherman Oaks, CA won first place for the two recipes in her entry.

Easy-to-make Pear and Blueberry Oatmeal is a filling combination of nutritious fruit and wholesome grains. Pear Chicken Nuggets are a great source of protein, with the added natural sweetness of canned pears for tot appeal.



Pears are a great, nutritious treat for kids of all ages.

PEAR AND BLUEBERRY OATMEAL

- 1 can (15½ ounces) Bartlett pear slices in extra-light syrup**
- 1 cup fresh blueberries**
- 3 tablespoons raisins**
- ¾ cup whole milk**
- 1 packet regular instant oatmeal or ½ cup oatmeal**

Combine pear slices (including liquid), blueberries and raisins in medium saucepan. Cook over medium heat until reduced and beginning to thicken, about 10 minutes. Set aside to cool. Mash or puree in food processor to desired consistency. Cook milk and oatmeal over medium heat for 3-5 minutes until thickened. Combine fruit puree with oatmeal and serve. Puree can also be

served over yogurt, cottage cheese or ice cream. (Makes 2 servings.)

Nutritional Information Per Serving: Calories 298, Protein 6g, Carbohydrate 63g, Fiber 6g, Fat 4g, Cholesterol 8mg, Sodium 99mg.

PEAR CHICKEN NUGGETS

- ¾ pound boneless, skinless chicken breast, cut in chunks**
- 1 large onion, diced**
- 2 tablespoons fresh parsley, chopped**
- 1 cup Bartlett canned pear slices in extra-light syrup, drained**
- ½ cup fresh bread crumbs**
- ½ cup seasoned dry bread crumbs**

Preheat oven to 400° F. Combine all ingredients except dried bread crumbs in food processor. Place between 2 sheets of plastic wrap and flatten into disc. Place mixture in freezer for 5-10 minutes. Remove plastic wrap. Using 2½ inch cookie cutter (or paring knife), cut into 8 shapes and coat in seasoned dry bread crumbs. Bake for 12-15 minutes. (Makes 8 servings.)

Nutritional Information Per Serving: Calories 100, Protein 8g, Carbohydrate 15g, Fiber 1g, Fat 1g, Cholesterol 17mg, Sodium 238mg.

For more kid-friendly recipes featuring canned pears, visit www.eatcannedpears.com.