



Strength in Plants By *Kate Murray*

A healthy alternative to the holiday cupcake



SPECIAL TO THE READING EAGLE: KATE MURRAY

YEARS AGO, my husband's aunt used to make peanut butter truffles. The recipe basically consisted of peanut butter, butter and chocolate. For all the peanut butter lovers in the family, this was heaven, but after one too many bellyaches, I decided the same flavor could be reborn into a healthier version.

I've been seeing different variations of energy bites gain popularity lately, so my version took shape just in time for a good friend's birthday.

For those of you who may not know this, I work full time as director of marketing for Grove Dental Group in Wyomissing. The team in my office is truly our biggest asset. I believe our employees genuinely care about their overall health and wellness, which enables us to enrich the lives of our patients and the community that we serve.

Some of the women in my office were discussing what to bring for Dr. Jeffrey Grove's birthday in lieu of cupcakes; he is a remarkably health con-

scious leader, and that definitely resonates throughout the office.

In fact, many of our team members participate in the company wellness program, which means they commit to a healthy lifestyle by exercising several mornings a week at 5 a.m. We collectively decided energy bites would be preferred by all over cupcakes. This recipe is kind to your taste buds, as well as your teeth.

I think it's important to recognize when there are folks out there who are really working

toward serving the greater good of our local community. Dr. Jeff is an example of one of those people. He recently was awarded the honor of "40 Under 40" by *Incisal Edge Magazine* for his commitment to his team and his community. I'm proud to say that I work with a team that inspires each other to commit to a healthy lifestyle. Go ahead, I challenge you to give it a try. Bring these energy bites to your office instead of cupcakes, and you just might find that eating healthy is contagious.

Energy Bites

INGREDIENTS

2 cups rolled oats
1 cup shredded coconut
2 cups natural peanut butter
1/2 cup pure maple syrup
3/4 cup finely chopped walnuts
3/4 cup mini chocolate chips
3 tablespoons white chia seeds, ground
2 teaspoons vanilla extract

Energy bites, made with peanut butter, oatmeal and chia seeds, pack a healthy punch.

PREP: Mix vanilla extract with peanut butter and maple syrup and set aside. Use a food processor to gently pulse walnuts and oats, then add chia seeds. Pulse gently to combine and then pour the dry mixture into the peanut butter mixture and fold in the mini chocolate chips. Note: I use a coffee grinder to grind up the chia seeds; you can add them whole, but they do get stuck in your teeth, so I prefer to grind them first. Just omit this ingredient if you can't find them or don't have them around the house.

Gently press together into a bite-size ball. Makes about 25 bites. ☺

Kate Murray is certified in plant-based nutrition and the author of "A Silent Cure in My Back Yard." Find more recipes at: asilentcure.org.

Place your advertising needs in our capable hands!



Jim Davidheiser
Berks Country advertising sales consultant

Jim can show you why *Berks Country* is the perfect place to market your business or services through advertising in the premier source for local agriculture, agri-business and agri-tainment!

Contact Jim for your advertising needs:

610-371-5143 or 484-706-3262 • jdavidheiser@readingeagle.com