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The holiday season has come and gone, but for many, the pounds from delicious meals are sticking around. For those looking to shed weight after indulging in sweet treats, prunes may be the answer to kicking off the new year right.

A [recent study](#), by researchers from the University of Liverpool found that the addition of prunes to one's diet can help control appetite, reduce overall consumed calories, and even lose more weight than those who don't eat them. Participants in the study consumed the fewest calories on average during their next meal due to feeling fuller after eating.

As a naturopathic physician from Naturopathic Physicians Group, a healthcare practice that prioritizes whole health and providing natural ways to bring your functions and systems into balance, I know the impact that this dried fruit can have on weight loss. Prunes benefit the body in a variety of ways, including:

Relieving constipation. Due to the high fiber amount in prunes, this superfood can help prevent constipation by **adding bulk to stool and speeding up the process of waste moving through one's digestive tract**. Prunes also naturally contain a sugar called sorbitol, which has a laxative effect when consumed and can prevent bloating.

Controlling appetite. People who eat **prunes feel more full after eating**, and this effect can last for long periods of time. This dietary benefit is due to the same soluble fiber that aids in constipation relief. Prunes also contain a low glycemic index, meaning that prunes increase blood sugar levels at a slow rate.

Supplying essential vitamins. Prunes contain **an array of vitamins and nutrients**, including vitamins A and B, magnesium, phosphorus, iron, and zinc. All these nutrients are important for one's health and may aid in liver health as well as bone strength. Reach for prunes instead of leftover holiday treats to charge your body for the day.

Lowering blood pressure. Say goodbye to lingering holiday stress by eating prunes. A 2010 study discovered that prunes can help to **significantly lower blood pressure** and promote cardiovascular health. Studies have found that it is important to reduce high blood pressure to lower your **risk of heart attacks and stroke**. According to the CDC, high blood pressure is a leading cause of death for Americans, so the regular consumption of prunes may keep health risks at bay.

Dr. Loreena Ryder is a naturopathic physician at Naturopathic Physicians Group in Scottsdale. Dr. Ryder's work includes a focus on female whole health and pain management, in addition to serving as a primary care provider. Dr. Ryder is certified in Applied Kinesiology. This manual muscle testing modality assists in finding the root of the problem within the body's structural, chemical, and mental aspects. She is also certified in Neuro Emotional Technique. The body holds emotional trauma and expresses it in many ways such as pain, depression, or anxiety. This bio-energetic technique offers a way to release trauma. Naturopathic Physicians Group has been treating a wide range of health challenges since 2004. For more information or to make an appointment, visit naturopathicgroup.com.