

There are some families that are desert families and some that are not. Mine was definitely a desert family. Growing up, we enjoyed the most sumptuous and extravagant sweets with our dinners. Whether we were going out or staying in, we would have cake, ice cream, truffles, tarts, or some other delicious treat at the end of the meal. Even if we were eating something basic like meatloaf or grilled chicken, dinner was not thought of as complete until we had something to counter the otherwise healthy meal. I would not say that we were hugely obese people, but we were definitely overweight. After all, even if you are otherwise eating healthy food, all those sweets can add up after a while. And add up they did!

When I moved out on my own and wanted to lose some weight, my solution was to cut out sweets entirely. I hated not having something sweet after dinner, but I didn't see any other way to do it. I would eat no sweets until my willpower gave out, then binge. I don't know why fresh fruit didn't occur to me as an option earlier, but it didn't. Once it did, however, it revolutionized my eating habits.

My parents would cook with fresh fruits, but they would never use them for dessert when I was growing up. Then one day, I received a fresh fruit basket from a friend. It was filled with fresh citrus fruit from Florida: oranges, lemons, and pomegranates. A lot of people scoff when they get fresh fruit baskets. They consider them to be a mediocre and uninspired gift. I reacted much differently. I was overjoyed to be getting all those fresh fruits. I practically ate myself sick!

A lot of people talk about the problems of eating too much fresh fruit. Supposedly, raw sugars are not much better for you than processed ones, and you can gain weight from eating fresh fruit almost as easily as from eating chocolate cake. This opinion is rubbish. If you eat your fruit fresh, you get the fiber, vitamins, and minerals that are incorporated into these natural foods, without the fats and carbohydrates that typical deserts are filled with. Yes it is possible to eat too much fresh fruit, but you can eat too much of anything! The bottom line is, fresh fruits are a great way to enjoy a little taste of something sweet without compromising your diet.