

## Sweet Ideas without Added Sugar

Article written by NATALIE SEHI, MS, RD, LMNT (nsehi2@unl.edu)  
Nutrition Education Program (NEP) Extension Educator

It seems like most holidays focus on food, and usually include something sweet like candy or chocolate. Don't get me wrong, I love a yummy piece of dark chocolate! If you're looking to make this Valentine's Day a little healthier for you and your family, consider starting the day with a fruit-filled smoothie (see the recipe below) or a parfait. I love smoothies and parfaits because you don't need to follow a recipe. Choose your family's favorite fruits and yogurt, place in a blender with a little milk or 100% juice and blend to a desired consistency for a smoothie. For a parfait, layer fruit and yogurt, then top with granola or nuts.

Fruit is a quick, easy, and healthy Valentine's treat. While looking for ideas for my children, I came across two cute ideas using Clementine's/cuties and applesauce. The messages read, "Happy Valentine's Day Cutie" & "You're AWESOMEsauce Valentine." Be creative and think outside the box. Visit with your children about healthier alternatives and let them help you pick them out at the store. Check out the "Non-food Valentine Ideas" to the right for ideas for daycare or school.

### A Smoothie for Your Sweetheart (1 serving)

- ¼ cup yogurt (vanilla or strawberry)
- ½ cup frozen strawberries
- ½ frozen banana
- ⅓ cup fat-free milk

1. Combine all ingredients in a blender.
2. Blend until smooth. Enjoy!



#### Sources:

1. Nebraska Extension's Food website: <http://food.unl.edu>
2. USDA's ChooseMyplate, Seasonal Resources: <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/seasonal>



For more information check out Food Fun for Young Children at:  
<http://go.unl.edu/chi>

### Non-food Valentine Ideas

- Friendship bracelets
- Yo-yos
- Toy cars
- Bubbles
- Sidewalk chalk
- Balloons
- Glow sticks
- Bouncy balls
- Pencils
- Erasers

