



Healthy Holiday Eating

Celebrate the holidays while celebrating your health

- Vow to maintain, not gain. If you're on a long-term weight loss plan, make every effort to maintain your weight. Maintaining weight despite the season's many temptations should be considered a reasonable goal.
- When going to a holiday potluck, bring along a healthy dish or treat you enjoy. Find ways to lighten up traditional recipes, or bring along a vegetable or fruit tray. Presentation and creativity count!
- Never go to a party hungry. Eat a small healthy meal or snack to ward off cravings, which can help make temptation easier to resist. Have a smart snack before going to a party to control your hunger.
- Drink water. Avoiding high-calorie beverages will make those holiday splurges easier on your waist-line. Enjoy a large (16 oz) water before going to a holiday gathering, and drink an 8 oz glass of water with every beverage consumed at a party. **THIS IS ONE OF THE BEST WAYS TO AVOID HOLIDAY OVEREATING!!**
- When dining buffet-style, choose a smaller plate and pile it high with fruits, vegetables and green salads. Then add lean roasted meats to your plate, and complete your plate with small portions of your higher calorie holiday favorites.
- Eat slowly and savor the flavors of your food.

- Wait at least 20 minutes before taking seconds.
- Dodge the pre-dinner cocktail. Alcohol makes you hungrier, and lower inhibitions can lead to poor food choices. Opt instead for a drink with your meal. Red wine tends to be drunk slower than a “chilled” white wine. When ordering cocktails, reach for those made with a low- or no-calorie mixer.
- Don't be too busy for breakfast. Skipping breakfast to make room for holiday party eating is the biggest way to de-rail healthy holiday eating! Starting the day with a healthy meal will help control cravings later. Be sure to include a lean protein with your breakfast.
- Be picky about dessert. Indulge only in your very favorites, and when presented with several dessert options, choose just one. Check in with yourself when eating. Do you want the whole portion of a rich treat, or do you feel satisfied after a few bites? A one ounce portion of dark chocolate tends to curb cravings for larger more calorie dense desserts!
- Make time for exercise - be active when you can. Even short bits of exercise can add up. Aim for at least 30 minutes of aerobic exercise every day. This not only helps with your weight maintenance, but if you have any stress over the holidays, it can help relieve the stress. Exercise influences gene expression – which influences weight gain and loss.
- Enjoy what you do eat and don't drive yourself crazy when you really want to eat something special. Moderation is the key!
- Focus on friends and family, not just the food. Make the company of loved ones the center of your gathering - not the tasty treats.

Happy Healthy Holidays May your days be Merry & Bright in 2011!

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Healthy Cooking Substitutes

Use two egg whites for one whole egg or three egg whites for two whole eggs.

Use skim milk instead of whole milk or two per cent milk.

Use a variety of spices and herbs. Try them in different dishes, meat, vegetable and fruit.

When you're baking muffins and breads, add fiber like oatmeal, wheat germ or raisin bran.

Use low sodium or non-sodium ingredients.

Replace or use less sugar with cardamom, cinnamon, nutmeg, vanilla or caramel when you bake. You can generally remove up to "half" of the amount of sweetener that most recipes call for without jeopardizing the texture and flavor!

Use low-fat sour cream, yogurt, or cottage cheese in place of sour cream. A little dill or other favorite fresh herb added is excellent for flavoring.

Substitute half of the all purpose white flour that most baking recipes call for with whole wheat flour.

Use applesauce in place of oil when you're baking.

For dry bread crumbs – Try rolled oats or crushed bran cereal.

For enriched pasta – Try whole wheat pasta.

For lettuce – Try arugula, chicory, baby spinach, dandelion greens, kale or watercress.

In casseroles, soups or stews where meat is the main ingredient – Try swapping out half of the meat with your favorite veggies.

For white rice – Try brown rice, wild rice, bulgur or pearl barley.

Holiday Cooking Tips:

Don't stuff the turkey with the dressing, as it absorbs much of the fat. Bake it in a covered casserole instead.

Sauté onions and celery in a small amount of butter (1 to 2 tablespoons) and use chicken or turkey broth for additional moisture.

Roast the turkey on a rack so the fat drips away from the bird.

Use a fat separator for the roasting pan juices and skim off all fat before making the gravy.

Make pumpkin pies with canned, evaporated, skimmed milk.

Use half the amount of sugar in your pie recipe - and substitute brown sugar for white, as it's more flavorful.

Use light whipped cream.

Eat the filling of the pie and just some of the high fat crust. Cover the crust with a napkin so you won't be tempted to nibble on it.

Mash the potatoes with chicken broth and canned, evaporated, skimmed milk. Top with just a Tablespoon or two of butter - NO ONE WILL NOTICE!

Use pineapple and/or orange juice thickened with corn starch as a glaze for carrots or sweet potatoes. (You can add a pinch of pumpkin pie spice to the glaze.)

Sprinkle hot vegetables with herbs for flavor instead of butter.

Use low fat canned cream soup in the traditional green bean casserole.

Consider SKIPPING THE DINNER ROLLS as there are so many other "bready" items such as stuffing, sweet potatoes, whipped potatoes, etc.

Use the 1-10 rating system during Thanksgiving dinner. Rate each food that is passed on a 1-10 scale (1 - not appealing, 10 - WOW, my favorite!) Eat mostly 9's and 10's, and limit or pass on the rest!

After dinner, go for a long walk with family and friends, or play outdoor games with the kids!

Buffet Table and Party Tips:

When you look at a wide array of food, make conscious choices.

Remind yourself that you don't have to eat everything to enjoy yourself.

Don't eat foods that are available at other times.

Concentrate on your favorites and those foods that are holiday specific.

Start with small portions, eat slowly and savor every bite.

Listen to your body and pay attention to the cues that you are satisfied.

Avoid eating until you are full.

Produce brightens up holiday tables – so serve crisp veggies with healthy dips such as hummus or salsa.

Have fresh fruit available along with cakes, pies and other desserts.

Bring a low fat appetizer or fruit dessert to assure that you will have a healthier dish to choose when going to parties.

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Food for Thought

By Joan Lavery-McLaughlin RD, LD

Healthy Holiday Eating - The holidays offer a bounty of family related activities and traditions, with many of them being centered on food. The season's endless array of tasty temptations can quickly derail healthy eating and pack on unwanted pounds. But alas, healthy eating and holiday fun can co-exist peacefully with a few simple dietary tweaks. Below are a few tips to help you enjoy the holiday season and avoid unwanted weight gain!

- Never go to a party hungry – be sure to eat a light snack before leaving the house.
- Use a small plate to keep portions in proportion.
- Exercise before you eat whenever possible – a brisk walk can help curb your appetite AND help you burn more calories.
- Fill up on fruits and veggies first and choose smaller servings of higher calorie/fat foods.
- Move away from the buffet table when socializing.
- Enjoy your favorite sweet treat, but watch your portion and don't go back for seconds.
- Cut back on your eating the day before and after a large holiday meal.
- Go light on the appetizers when a meal is being served.
- Take second helpings of salads and vegetables if you are still hungry.
- Listen to your stomach and stop eating when you feel full.

Source: www.exercise.about.com

Festive Holiday Spring Rolls



Welcome guests to your holiday buffet table with these easy to prepare fresh rolls! They are simple to put together, and make a great finger food for parties and potlucks, or serve as an appetizer or a main course offering (makes a perfect substitute for salad, but also includes enough protein for a complete meal). They also make a terrific snack for any time of the day or night. As a bonus, they're very healthy - low in both calories and fat, and naturally gluten-free. ENJOY!

Ingredients

- 1 package large dried rice wrappers (rice paper)
- 1 cup cooked lean protein (baked chicken or turkey/cooked shrimp/baked tofu cut into thin strips - toss lean protein in 1 -2 Tablespoons tamari (soy) sauce to taste)
- 1 cup fresh cilantro leaves
- 1 cup fresh sweet basil, roughly chopped if leaves are large
- 1/2 large cucumber, sliced into matchstick-like pieces
- 1 carrot, grated
- 1 cup fresh bean sprouts

Method

Except for the rice rolls, place each of the above ingredients in a separate bowl and set aside.

Fill a large bowl half full of hot water (but not scalding, as you will have to dip your fingers in it). Place bowl and wrappers on a clean working surface, such as a cutting board.

Take out one of the rice wrappers and place it in the bowl of hot water. You may have to gently press the wrapper down into the water. The rice paper will soften in approximately 30 seconds.

When the wrapper is soft enough to eat (these rolls do not require cooking), remove from water and place on the clean working surface.

Working always horizontally, place slices of the chicken (or tofu/shrimp) toward the left end of the wrapper. Now add some of the cucumber on top.

Next add a little carrot, fresh cilantro, basil, and bean sprouts.

Begin to roll by folding the bottom portion of rice paper over the ingredients. Continue by lifting the right side of the wrapper and folding it over the ingredients.

To complete the roll, fold top side down, OR roll the spring roll forward until all the end of the rice paper. Try to keep your folding/rolling as tight as possible. The ingredients should appear at one end to create an "open" type of fresh roll. To secure the roll, simply dip your fingers in a little water and wet the end flap, then press to seal.

Place upright in a bowl (like a bouquet), or on a platter. Serve with hoisin sauce and/or Thai Sweet Chili Sauce (available at most large supermarkets in the Asian section, or in Asian/Chinese food stores) or with other favorite dipping sauce.

Serves 4 - 6 as an appetizer.

Serve with your favorite "Thai style" dipping sauce.

Baked Coconut Shrimp



A new twist on an old favorite! By simply baking the shrimp rather than frying them, you can revamp this crowd pleasing dish into a protein packed treat with less than $\frac{1}{2}$ the fat and calories of the "fried" version. They can be adapted for gluten-free diets as well. ENJOY!

Ingredients

1 pound large raw shrimp, peeled, deveined, and butterflied
1 teaspoon olive oil or non stick cooking spray
1 egg + 2 egg whites
1/2 cup Panko (flaky, Japanese-style bread crumbs)
1/2 cup sweetened flaked coconut
Pinch of sea salt
 $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon cayenne pepper or red chili pepper flakes (optional)

Method

Heat oven to 450 degrees. Peel shrimp. With a small, sharp knife, "butterfly" shrimp by cutting down the middle and opening slightly, like a book. Remove any dark, stringy veins. Lightly coat a baking sheet with oil or non stick spray. Beat egg and egg whites in a shallow bowl. Combine Panko, coconut, sea salt and cayenne pepper (if using) in another shallow bowl. Dip shrimp in egg mixture, then into crumb mixture, pressing to coat and placing shrimp on the baking sheet as you go. Bake on the middle rack for ~ 5 minutes per side (turn the shrimp halfway through baking), or until light golden brown.

Serves 6 - 8 as an appetizer.

Serve with mango dipping sauce (see recipe) OR Thai sweet chili sauce (available at most supermarkets in the Asian section). ENJOY!

***For Gluten-free Diets:** Instead of the Panko breadcrumbs, Use plain or sesame-flavored rice crackers ground up into fine crumbs with a food processor or chopper (to make 1/2 cup). The results are very similar to Panko!

Mango Dipping Sauce:

This Mango Sauce/Dip is easy to make, and versatile too! Use it as a dip for cooked shrimp (great with coconut shrimp!), calamari, spring rolls or fresh rolls, or whatever appetizers you happen to be serving up. You can also use this mango sauce in stir-fries, such as mango chicken or shrimp stir fry. Be sure to buy the ripest mango you can find. ENJOY!

Ingredients:

- 1 ripe mango
- 1 Tablespoon fish sauce, OR 1 Tablespoon soy sauce + pinch of sea salt
- 2 Tablespoons coconut milk
- 1 Tablespoon Thai sweet chili sauce (available in most supermarkets in the Asian section)
- 1 Tablespoon brown sugar
- 1 Tablespoon lime juice
- 1/4 to 1/2 tsp. dried crushed chili (to taste)

Peel and cube mango and place in a food processor, blender, or large chopper. Add all other ingredients and process until smooth. Adjust seasonings to taste. Makes ~ 1 cup of sauce.



Sweet Potato Dip

Ingredients:

- 1 can of white beans
- 1 or 2 leftover peeled roasted sweet potatoes
- ¼ cup of olive oil
- ½ cup grated parmesan
- Salt & pepper

Directions:

Puree a can of white beans in a food processor with roasted sweet potatoes, olive oil, grated parmesan, and salt and pepper. Garnish with toasted nuts and serve with crackers.



Crostini with Thyme-Roasted Tomatoes

Ingredients:

- 4 Plum tomatoes, halved lengthwise
- Extra-virgin olive oil, for drizzling
- Kosher or sea salt and freshly ground pepper
- 1 to 2 teaspoons dried thyme
- 8 1/2-inch-thick slices baguette, cut on the bias
- 1 clove garlic

Directions:

Preheat the oven to 275 degrees. Place the tomatoes cut-side up in a shallow baking dish. Drizzle with olive oil and sprinkle with salt, pepper and the thyme. Roast 1 hour 30 minutes to 2 hours, or until the tomatoes are very soft and slightly shrunken.

Increase the oven temperature to 400 degrees. Place the baguette slices on a baking sheet, drizzle with olive oil and bake until golden brown, about 10 minutes. Rub the crostini with garlic and top each with a roasted tomato.



Artichokes Au Gratin

Ingredients:

- Extra-virgin olive oil, for brushing
- 4 tablespoons plain or seasoned breadcrumbs
- 1 12-ounce jar marinated artichoke bottoms, drained and patted dry
- 1 1/2 teaspoons grated parmesan cheese
- 1/4 pound soft sheep's milk cheese or brie, rind removed, sliced
- 1 cup mixed salad greens
- 2 tablespoons balsamic vinaigrette

Directions:

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Brush a 9-inch square baking dish with olive oil and sprinkle with 2 tablespoons breadcrumbs. Place the artichokes cup-side up on the breadcrumbs and brush or drizzle with olive oil. Sprinkle with 1 tablespoon breadcrumbs and the parmesan.

Bake for 15 minutes; remove from the oven and preheat the broiler. Divide the sheep's milk cheese among the artichokes; sprinkle with the remaining 1 tablespoon breadcrumbs. Broil until the cheese starts to bubble and the topping browns, 3 to 4 minutes. Toss the salad greens with the balsamic vinaigrette in a bowl; serve the artichokes on top of the greens.



Avocado Pesto-Stuffed Tomatoes

Ingredients:

- 30 Cherry Tomatoes
- ½ medium avocado, pitted, peeled and cut up
- 2 oz. cream cheese
- 2 Tbsp. homemade or purchased basil pesto
- 1 teaspoons fresh lemon juice

Directions:

1. Cut a thin slice from the top of each tomato. With a small spoon or small melon baller carefully hollow out the tomatoes. Line a baking sheet with paper towels. Invert tomatoes on the towels. Let stand 30 minute to drain.
2. Meanwhile, for filling, in a food processor bowl combine avocado, cream cheese, pesto, and lemon juice. Cover; process until smooth. Spoon filling into a pastry bag fitted with a large plain round or open start tip.
3. Place tomatoes, open sides up, on a serving platter. Pipe filling into the tomato cups. Serve immediately or cover loosely and refrigerate up to 4 hours before serving. Sprinkle with snipped basil before serving.

Makes 30 appetizers.



Edamame Dip with Pita Chips

Ingredients:

- 3 Pita Breads, split horizontally, each round cut into 1 ½" wedges
- 1 12-oz bag frozen shelled edamame (2 1/3 cups), unthawed
- ¼ cup of olive oil
- 2 teaspoons fresh lemon juice

Directions:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Scatter pita pieces on large rimmed baking sheet. Sprinkle with salt. Bake until crisp, 15 minutes; cool.

Cook edamame in large saucepan of boiling water until tender, 5 minutes. Drain, reserving ¼ cup cooking liquid.

Place edamame, oil, and ¼ cup reserved cooking liquid in processor. Blend until smooth, drizzling in ¼ cup cooking liquid and lemon juice. Season dip with salt & pepper. Blend in more cooking liquid by tablespoonfuls if too thick. Transfer dip to bowl. Serve with pita chips.