Food is everywhere during the holiday season, making it tough to stick to your healthful eating and exercise habits. With a little attention and planning, you can make it through the holidays without losing track of your healthy lifestyle. Remember that food is not the ONLY enjoyable thing about the holidays; remember to enjoy other activities and traditions as well!

**Party Time!**

- Eat a snack before you leave home. If you arrive at a party starving, you’ll be more likely to overindulge.
- Stick to your regular eating schedule!
- Survey the entire table before you take any food.
- Why waste calories on foods that don’t bring you pleasure?
- Do not graze. Try not to hang out near the food.
- If you do, try snacking on raw veggies first!

**Hors d’oeuvres, anyone?**

Among the most heart healthy starters are:

- Raw vegetables, particularly broccoli and cauliflower because of their high fiber content.
- Hummus, which contains good monounsaturated fats.
- Limit the amount of cheese, sauces or mayonnaise, and meats you consume before as well as during meals.

**Healthy Eating: Use MyPlate**

- Make your plate colorful and full of different textures
- Choose at least 2 large portions of fruits and vegetables
- Choose smaller portions of Grains/Potato/Yam and a Lean Protein
Chunky Cranberry Dip

**Ingredients**
- 1 8-oz. package reduced fat cream cheese
- 1-2 tbsp. low fat milk
- 1/2 cup chopped dried cranberries
- 1/4 cup chopped blanched almonds
- 1/2 tsp. orange zest, preferably fresh

In a medium bowl, place cheese and allow to soften at room temperature. Mash and work with fork until texture is light enough to combine easily with other ingredients. Gradually add milk until cheese becomes soft and spreadable. Mix in remaining ingredients. Cover and refrigerate up to 2 days ahead or let stand at room temperature 1 hour before serving to allow flavors to blend.

1 Tbsp = Each serving provides:
- Calories: 29
- Total fat: 2 grams
- Saturated fat: Less than 1 gram

**Tips...**

**Cranberry Sauce:** Go easy on the gravy and opt for canned cranberry sauce on your turkey for a nutritious and fat-free option.

**Vegetables:** Steamed or roasted vegetables add lots of nutrients and are relatively low in calories, fat and sodium.

**Cocoa:** When holiday baking recipes call for chocolate, you can substitute three tablespoons of cocoa for every one ounce of chocolate in many recipes.

**Evaporated Milk:** Substitute canned evaporated milk in recipes that call for cream. An easy way to make your holiday baking a little bit healthier, lower in calories and more nourishing.

**Other makeover tips...**

- Most pumpkin pie recipes call for at least 1 cup of cream or evaporated whole milk and 2 eggs. Use **evaporated skim** and 3 egg whites to cut about 300 calories and 30-38 grams of fat.

- Buy brown-and-serve **bread rolls** instead of higher-fat crescent rolls to cut about 1,100 extra calories and about 100 grams of fat per dozen.

- Use **light cream cheese** instead of regular cream cheese in your holiday dips, spreads, and cheesecakes to cut about 16 grams of fat per cup of cream cheese.
More Resources....

choosemyplate.gov

njaes.rutgers.edu/health

getmovinggethealthynj.rutgers.edu

Family & Community Health Sciences Healthy Recipes
vimeo.com/getmovinggethealthynj/videos
Explore our healthy recipe videos!

EatingWell.com has lots of healthy recipes.

Mayo Clinic Healthy Recipes
mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/recipes

The Food Network’s Healthy Dinners in 40 Minutes or Less
foodnetwork.com/healthy/packages/healthy-every-week/quick-and-simple/healthy-dinners-in-40-minutes-or-less
Look out for YOU

**Be assertive**: Don't feel as though you have to say yes to everyone that offers you food and drink. If you are not hungry, then simply say so, and do not let yourself be bullied into eating something that you really don't want.

**Leave what you don't want**: Don't feel obliged to “clean your plate.” Be mindful: When you feel full, stop eating.

**Prioritize**: If you know that you have 3 or 4 events in one week, pick one of those events that you will splurge and then be conscious to scale back at the other events.

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Additional Resources....

Dept. of Family & Community Health Sciences (Rutgers NJAES)

Handling Leftovers Safely

Eating Together-Eating Well: Nutrient-Rich Family Meals

Eating Well

Cooking light

Happy Holidays!