



Make Healthier Choices During the Holidays

The holidays are filled with classic comfort foods that warm our bodies and spirits. As you celebrate with friends and family, here are some small changes you can make this holiday season to stay healthy:

- * For dessert, focus on fruits by making baked apples or pears with cinnamon.
- * Go easy on gravies and sauces, which can be high in fat, sodium, and sugar.
- * When baking, cut sugar in half then use extra cinnamon or vanilla for sweetness.
- * Choose lean proteins, like turkey, roast beef, beans, and some types of fish like cod or flounder.
- * Instead of soda, alcohol, or juices, quench your thirst with water with lime slices or seltzer water with a splash of 100% fruit juice.
- * Trim fat when cooking meats.
- * Laugh, dance, and play games at gatherings— focus on fun and enjoy getting some extra movement.
- * Bake healthier by using unsweetened applesauce or mashed ripe bananas in place of butter.
- * Give gifts like running shoes, reusable water bottle, and workout DVD's that encourage healthy habits.
- * Enjoy all of the food groups at celebrations:
 - whole grain crackers with hummus make a great appetizer
 - adding unsalted nuts or black beans to a leafy green salad boosts protein
 - include fresh fruits at the dessert table
 - use low-fat milk instead of heavy cream in sauces and casseroles
 - be the one to bring a healthy vegetable dish to a pot luck or party
- * Create delicious new meals with your leftovers from parties and gatherings:
 - add leftover turkey to soups or salads
 - use leftover vegetables in omelets, sandwiches, or stews



For more tips, go to www.MyPlate.gov

**This is the feast-time of the year
When hearts grow warm and home more dear;**

~Harriet McEwen Kimball



The **Better Living for Texans** program provides free lessons for limited resource audiences on topics such as basic nutrition, food safety, and food budgets. For more information please contact: Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Phone: (361) 575-4581 <http://agrilife.org/victoriacountyblt/>

Cran-Apple Crisp

Ingredients

4 apples, cored and thinly sliced
1 can cranberry sauce, 14 oz. whole
2/3 Tablespoon margarine, soft
1 cup oatmeal, uncooked
1/3 cup brown sugar
1 teaspoon cinnamon

Directions

1. Wash your hands thoroughly and clean your preparation area.
2. Preheat oven to 400 degrees.
3. Wash apples, remove cores and slice thinly, keeping peel on.
4. In a bowl, combine the cranberries and apples. Pour into an 8x8 inch pan.
5. Combine melted margarine with oatmeal, brown sugar, and cinnamon until well blended. Sprinkle over apple/cranberry mixture.
6. Cover and bake for 15 minutes.
7. Uncover and bake 10 more minutes until the topping is crisp and brown.
8. Serve warm or cold.



Makes 8 servings ~ 204 calories per serving

From: <https://whatscooking.fns.usda.gov/>

Save Money on Holiday Meals

Most Americans tend to plan holidays around food— where to eat, who will cook, what to eat, and who is bringing what to each gathering. With continually rising food costs, it is wise to plan ahead this season to save money.

* Plan your holiday meals in advance. Start by looking at what you already have on hand. Maybe you already have a can of yams in the pantry (perhaps left over from last year's holiday) that is not yet expired. Items that expire quickly will have to be purchased right before your holiday feast, but looking through your pantry may give you some meal ideas and also save you some money on non-perishable foods. Now, plan your holiday menu and make a list of what you will need, keeping in mind that purchasing store brands can usually save you money.

* Look at store ads. Around the holidays, certain items will go on sale and some stores may have “buy this, get that free” offers around the holidays.

* Use coupons when possible. Start looking in the newspaper or online a few weeks before your gathering for coupons that you will need for the meals you have planned.

* Consider downsizing your holiday meal by reducing the portion size of the more expensive items on your menu (like meat). Most people will not miss the extra food because everyone always fills up on side dishes anyway. Keep dishes simple and do not make variations of the same foods.

Have a Happy, Safe, and Healthy Fall season!

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USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer. This material was funded by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program -- SNAP. The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) provides nutrition assistance to people with low income. It can help you buy nutritious foods for a better diet. To find out more, go to YourTexasBenefits.com or call 1-877-541-7905.

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