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Nutrition Nibbles

Holiday Handbook

Think of this issue of *Nutrition Nibbles* as your user manual for the holiday season. While the National Institutes of Health report that Americans gain an average of only one pound between Halloween and the New Year, this extra weight accumulates year after year contributing to overweight and obesity. This double-issue newsletter can help you from becoming double-wide with tips on everything from graciously getting rid of your Halloween Candy to braving the buffet table. Good luck this season and Best Wishes for a happy, healthy New Year!

~Mary

How to Handle that Halloween Candy!

Have you “dealt” with your Halloween candy yet? Those holiday treats hanging around the house and office can make maintaining your weight a challenge. Here are a few things you can do with that left-over candy:

1. **Donate it to the troops!** Send your leftover treats to soldiers abroad. Check out Operation Care and Comfort at <http://www.operationcareandcomfort.org/ocshoplist/index.html> or Operation Shoebox at <http://www.operationshoebox.com/> for more information.
2. **Stash it in the freezer for holiday baking or gingerbread houses.** “Hide” those chocolate candy bars deep in the freezer and when it comes time to bake holiday cookies, chop them up and throw them in the mixing bowl. That candy is also a great way to trim your gingerbread house.
3. **Send the candy to work with your spouse/friend/neighbor.** Don’t bring that Halloween candy to work with you—you don’t want to sabotage yourself!
4. **Spoil a nursing home or women’s shelter.** Donate your candy to a local nursing home or shelter and bring a smile to someone’s face.
5. **Create a care package for an out-of-town friend or grandparent.** It’s always fun to receive something in the mail, other than bills!
6. **And my personal favorite... Toss it out!** Better to waste that candy, than to “waist it!”

Next year: *Don’t buy your candy until Oct 31st and buy only what you need! Better yet: giveaway non-candy treats!*

**Questions or Comments? Email me at
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College Corner:
Party Like A Slim Star
Partying can pack on the pounds quite quickly! Think of how many margaritas you can down in an evening and then multiply that by an average of 300 calories per cocktail. (Keep in mind there are 3500 calories in one pound of body weight). If you have a series of holiday festivities lined up this season, you may want to give some consideration to your partying strategies.

- Of course, plain water or mineral water is your best bet. It hydrates, it’s refreshing, it has no calories, and it’s safe!
- When water won’t do (by itself), consider alternating your alcoholic or calorie-rich beverages with water to slow down your energy intake.
- Celebrate with wine or champagne instead of a cocktail. Five ounces of wine has about 125 calories, compared to 300 or more in an average cocktail. Five ounces of champagne contains about 100 calories.
- Choose different mixers.

Create a Tasty, Healthy Thanksgiving Feast

The components of a typical Thanksgiving meal are actually quite healthy: low-fat turkey breast, root vegetables, squash, and anti-oxidant rich cranberries. It's what we do to them that is the problem--drown them in butter, fry them in fat, and drench them in sugar. It doesn't have to be this way!

Turkey Tip #1: Modify Your Favorite Holiday Recipes.

First, review your recipes and identify the ingredients high in fat, sugar, or salt. Think about those ingredients' functions--do they add flavor, texture, act as a thickener? Then ask yourself if you can substitute at least *some* of that ingredient with a lighter or more nutrient-rich alternative. For example, take the classic green bean casserole recipe and substitute nonfat milk for whole milk, swap the regular cream of mushroom soup for the low-fat, low sodium version, use fresh green beans in place of canned beans, and top with slivered almonds instead of French-fried onions. Voila! A lighter, healthier yet equally tasty version of your favorite!

Turkey Tip #2: Seek Out Lighter Recipes.

There are so many websites and recipe books that offer healthier versions of the Thanksgiving classics. You don't have to stick with the same old recipes you've been using for years, experiment with some new ones! Check out these sites: www.cookinglight.com and www.eatingwell.com.

Turkey Tip #3: Try Out Some Crowd-Pleasing Party Tricks.

You won't be the only one thank-

ful this year--your guests will appreciate your attention to healthy details too!

- Provide vegetables with hummus or a low-fat dip as a party appetizer.
- Add different salads to the menu to incorporate more fruits and vegetables. Try adding fresh or dried fruit to your regular green salad.
- Prepare more side-dishes that contain vegetables and whole grains. Keep an eye out for whole grain bread crumbs and stuffing mix and then add extra vegetables.
- Start the big meal off with a vegetable-rich, broth-based soup.
- Flavor your favorite dishes with more herbs and spices instead of extra salt and fat.
- Serve fruit for dessert or to cleanse the palate.
- Offer low-calorie beverages to your guests, such as sparkling mineral water, tea, coffee, or diet sodas.
- Go for a group walk before or after the dinner meal. You can burn approximately 200 calories with 30 minutes of brisk walking.

Turkey Tip #4: Watch Your Portions!

Often, it is not what we eat but *how much* that gets us into the most trouble. Be mindful of your recipe's serving sizes and try to stick to them. Keep an eye on nutrition labels, especially the suggested serving sizes and calories. Consider dishing up dinner on slightly smaller plates to naturally shrink your portions.

Happy Thanksgiving!

College Corner continued...

When whipping up a mixed drink, use diet soda or light juice and save 100 calories per drink.

- Opt for light beer and save 30-50 calories per bottle.

If you drink, don't drive and if you drive, don't drink. May you have a merry season!

T-Day Fun Facts

- Did you know that 90% of Americans eat turkey as a main course on Thanksgiving?
- The most popular ways to serve leftover Thanksgiving turkey are as a sandwich, in stew or soup, in chili and casseroles, and as turkey burgers. Yummy!
- Most Americans overeat on Thanksgiving, consuming an average of **3000** calories at the main meal!
- Tryptophan in turkey makes you sleepy ONLY if you eat large quantities on an empty stomach. Most Thanksgiving post-meal napping is the result of eating massive quantities of carbohydrates (not turkey) in a sitting.

Best Light Pumpkin Pie

This pumpkin pie saves 100 calories per slice from the traditional version and it tastes identical!

1 cup ginger snaps (about 16 cookies)
16 oz can pumpkin
1/2 cup egg whites (about 4)
1/2 cup sugar
2 tsp pumpkin pie spice (1.25 tsp cinnamon, 1/2 tsp ginger, 1/4 tsp cloves)
12 oz can evaporated skim milk

Preheat the oven to 350°. Grind the cookies in a food processor. Lightly spray a 9" glass pie pan with

vegetable cooking spray. Pat the cookie crumbs into the bottom of the pan evenly. Mix the rest of the ingredients in a medium-sized mixing bowl. Pour into the crust and bake until knife inserted in center comes out clean, about 45 minutes. Store in the refrigerator.

Allow to cool and slice in 8 wedges. Optional: serve each wedge with fat free whipped cream.

Serves 8. Each slice: 165 calories, 1.5 g fat, .5 g saturated fat, 1.5 mg cholesterol, 170 mg sodium, 32 g carbohydrate, 2 g fiber, 6 g protein.

--Recipe Courtesy of Food and Health Communications

Give the Gift of Health This Season

(a.k.a. Non-Food Gift Ideas)

Rather than buying your boss or the party hostess a box of chocolates this year, why not try giving one of these healthier alternatives?

- A subscription to *Cooking Light* or *Eating Well* magazine--A fun way to inject some new ideas and flavors into your friends' menus.
- A Pedometer (My Favorite: Omron HJ-105)--Step it up together in the New Year.
- A Yoga DVD--Give the gift of Zen with a yoga DVD. Rodney Yee's AM and PM Yoga features two short, enjoyable workouts.
- A Massage--Pamper another this season.
- A gift card to Trader Joe's or Whole Foods--Everyone loves to stock-up on healthy eats.

Santa's Tip: Many of the above gift ideas are available at www.amazon.com

Sweating Through The Season

Does the thought of zipping up your holiday dress or hopping on the scale January 1st cause you to break out into a cold sweat? Resolve to make exercise a priority throughout the holiday parties, festive gatherings, and shopping marathons. Here are a few tips for squeezing in some sweat time:

- **Schedule in your workouts** and follow through with them just like you would a doctor's appointment or business meeting.
- **Switch it up.** Try a different type of physical activity to keep yourself interested this season.

If you always hit the elliptical machine, take an outside stroll or an indoor spinning class.

- **Break it down.** Don't be afraid to tackle bite-size exercise sessions if you don't have time for your usual routine. Three daily 10-minute bouts work just as well as a continuous 30-minute workout.
- **Get creative!** Stretch or do sit-ups during TV commercial breaks. Clean your own house instead of hiring someone else to do it. Think outside of the box (or gym bag, so to speak)!

Braving the Buffet Table

Follow these 4 simple steps the next time you tread at the holiday buffet table:

Step 1: Don't arrive hungry!

If you want to maintain control of your dietary choices at the dinner table, make sure to eat regularly throughout the day. Eat a sensible breakfast and lunch, even a snack if needed. Fill-up on voluminous foods all day before hitting the buffet table at night-- fruits, salads, and broth-based soups are sensible choices.

Step 2: Offer to bring a dish.

Your host and your waistline will thank you! Bring an entrée or side dish to share that you know is low in calories and good for everyone. Make that a center attraction on your own plate.

Step 3: Survey your options.

Before piling anything on your plate, check out all the options that are available. Stack your plate with lower calorie fruits and veggies, low-fat dips, reduced-fat chips, and salads first, and then choose a few bites of the foods you can't live without. And remember, if the food doesn't taste as good as you imagined, leave it on your plate, and save those calories for something else exquisite.

Step 4: Choose low calorie beverages.

Opt to chew your calories rather than sip them down. Stick to mineral water with a twist of lime or a wine spritzer. Alternate any alcoholic beverages with a tall glass of plain water.

Bound Over Those Holiday Hurdles: Don't let the season's trimmings get the best of you!

Watch Out for Seasonal Sippers!

Festive holiday beverages can really pack in the sugar, fat, and calories. Exercise caution when sipping these treats:

- 16 ounce Peppermint Mocha with whip cream and 2% milk: 400 calories, 15g fat, 50g sugar
- 16 ounce Gingerbread Latte with whip cream and 2% milk: 340 calories, 13g fat, 36g sugar
- 16 ounce Eggnog Latte: 470 calories, 21g fat, 48g sugar
- 16 ounce Pumpkin Spice Latte with whip cream and 2% milk: 380 calories, 13g fat, 49g sugar
- Drinking 3 peppermint mochas each week over the next 3 weeks, without compensating for those calories through exercise or portion control, would cause one pound of weight gain. Plus, you would have slurped down almost 113 teaspoons of sugar! **Smart Sipper Tip:** Choose nonfat milk, skip the whip cream, and limit the number of times you order one of these special drinks.
- 1 cup Eggnog: 340 calories, 19g fat, 21g sugar
- 1 cup Apple Cider: 120 calories, 0g fat, 26g sugar
- 1 Pomegranate Martini: 225 calories, 0g fat, 29g sugar
- If you party with 5 cups of eggnog and 8 pomegranate martinis this season, you'll gain one more extra pound!

Be on the lookout for Bite-Size Belt Busters!

While tiny and tasty, overindulge and appetizers can do you in. Light choices include fruit platters, vegetables dipped in salsa, hummus, or a black bean dip. Serve whole wheat crackers with fat free cream cheese topped with pepper jelly. Limit your portions of these hors d'oeuvres:

- Spinach-Artichoke Parmesan Dip (2 Tbsp): 100 calories
- Bruschetta (2 slices): 380 cal
- Mini-Quiche (each): 50-60 cal
- Vegetarian Eggroll (2): 190 cal
- Batter-Fried Shrimp (each): 60 cal
- Tortilla Chips (10 chips): 140 cal
- Breaded Mozzarella Cheese Stick (each): 90 cal
- Beef Taquito (each): 70 cal
- Cheddar Cheese (1" cube): 70 cal
- Brie Cheese (1" cube): 60 cal
- If you ate all of the above party fare at 3 different holiday parties, you'd be up one pound on the scale!

Beware of those Cookie Cutter Calories!

It only takes one special time of year to turn your stomach into a bowl full of jelly. Think twice before mindlessly nibbling on those trays of cookies.

- Peanut Butter Cookie: 135 cal
- Gingerbread Man: 280 cal
- Frosted Sugar Cookies (2 small): 160 cal
- M & M Candy Cookie: 160 cal
- Pumpkin Muffin: 530 cal
- Fruitcake (1 slice): 330 cal
- Fudge (small piece): 70 cal
- Ghirardelli Peppermint Bark (3 squares): 200 cal
- If you eat twice the above amount, you'll weigh one more pound by New Year's Day!

Hoard Your Health: Festive Immunity Boosting Tips

Don't let your immune system take a hit this holiday! Cold weather and sick colleagues can contribute to a case of the ills but so does overwhelming your body with refined sugars and empty-calorie alcohol. Curling up indoors can also contribute to a case of the blues. Keep healthy by following a few smart strategies:

- **Balance out those fun foods (decadent desserts and festive cocktails) with extra servings of vitamin and mineral-rich fruits and vegetables.** Not only are these foods tasty and good-for-you, they help hydrate you too! Aim for 4 cups of produce daily.
- **Boost your mood with good quality carbs.** Whole grains like brown rice and whole wheat pasta, yams, sweet potatoes, pumpkin, and winter squash provide energy-rich, fiber filled carbohydrate that keeps your blood sugar and mood stable. They are also a satisfying addition to any meal.
- **Stretch in the sunshine.** We tend to spend more time indoors

during the cool winter months. Get outside and go for a short walk each day. Your body will synthesize a little extra Vitamin D, important in bone maintenance, weight management, and overall immunity.

- **Focus on vitamin C and antioxidant-rich foods.** Slip citrus fruit, cabbage, broccoli, pumpkin, sweet potatoes and spinach into your meals and snacks to bolster your immune system.
- **Probiotics and polyphenols may do the trick.** Yogurt, full of good bacteria or probiotics, can ensure that your body is maintaining a healthy flora to fight off infection. Look for the Live and Active Cultures label on your favorite yogurt brands. Tea, rich in polyphenols, may have some virus-fighting properties. Sip on green or black tea for a healthy warm-up during the day. **To Your Health!**