



DINING ON A DIME

Eating Better for Less

November

Healthy Holiday Eating

The winter holidays are a wonderful time to celebrate with family and friends. But holiday events may pose a special challenge for healthy eating and unwanted weight gain. According to a study by the National Institutes of Health, most Americans gain about one pound between Thanksgiving and New Year's Day. While this may not seem like much, the extra weight usually accumulates through the years and can contribute to overweight or obesity later in life.

This year, try designing a strategy by planning what, when and how much you eat or serve during holiday events.



The Main Event

No matter whether you are hosting or attending a holiday party, try to stock your plate with a variety of low fat, high fiber foods. Enjoy foods such as bean dip, fresh fruits and vegetables and grilled or broiled lean meats, fish and poultry without the skin. Increase fiber content by choosing whole grain breads and crackers, vegetables and fruits.

Drinks Anyone?

Water and seltzer are both healthful, no-calorie beverages that can quench your thirst and help you feel full. Want something more festive? There are plenty of flavored waters on the market. Just read the label to ensure that it's a low-calorie beverage. Seltzer mixed with fruit juices or hot apple cider also make refreshing and colorful alternatives to other higher-calorie holiday beverages.

Dessert Dilemma

If you're like most people, no matter how much you've eaten at dinner, there always seems to be room for dessert. Delight in having your favorite holiday treat, only cut down on the portion size and limit how often you eat high-sugar, high-fat foods.

Party Planning

Always try to eat a healthful snack before you attend an event so that you won't be tempted to overeat high-calorie foods at the party. Focus on enjoying yourself with good company and conversation. For instance, start a game of some kind. Stand or sit away from snack trays and buffet lines. Enjoy a healthy holiday season!

Mail-Order Food Safety

The holidays can be a great time to mail-order food products as gifts for family and friends. Food safety, however, can be a concern if you are sending a homemade product or if you are purchasing through a mail-order company. Perishable foods, especially meat, poultry, fish and dairy items such as cheesecake, must be carefully handled to prevent foodborne illness.



Be sure to consider the following food safety tips to ensure that gifts are handled safely.

Tips for the Purchaser

- Ask the company how the food will be mailed. If it's a perishable item, it should be delivered as quickly as possible -- ideally, overnight. Make sure perishable items and the outer package are labeled "Keep Refrigerated" to alert the recipient.
- Alert the recipient of a gift's expected arrival. Avoid sending packages to business addresses or where there will not be refrigerator storage.

Tips for the Receiver

- When you receive a food item marked "Keep Refrigerated," open it immediately and check its temperature. The food should arrive frozen or partially frozen with ice crystals still visible. Even if the product is smoked, cured and/or fully cooked, it is still a perishable product and must be kept cold. If a perishable food arrives warm, notify the company. Do not consume or even taste the food.
- Refrigerate or freeze perishable items immediately. If a product is partially defrosted it is safe to refreeze it, but consider that there may be a slight loss of quality.

Tips for those who prefer to "Mail-It-Yourself"

- Perishable foods will stay at a safe temperature longest if they first are frozen solid. After freezing, pack your food gift with a cold source such as a frozen gel pack or dry ice.
- Pack your frozen gift in a sturdy box. Foam packing will further insulate the product. Fill up any empty space with crushed paper or foam "popcorn." Air space in the box will cause the food and cold source to thaw faster. Label the outside wrapper "Keep Refrigerated."
- Ship products overnight and alert the recipient of the gift's expected arrival.

Source: Food Safety and Inspection Service, available at <http://fsis.usda.gov/OA/pubs/mailorder.htm>

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What's the Price of Your Low Carb Diet?

Ever wonder how much your low carbohydrate lifestyle might be costing you? K-State Research and Extension did some undercover work to determine the cost differences between original and 'low carb' products. We compared the price and carbohydrate amounts of popular original and low carb products. How did low carb products fare? When comparing products of the same brands and serving sizes, we found that many of the low carb varieties had only slightly lower carbohydrates, but a much higher price.

How do marketer's fool us? Oftentimes, a low carb product is actually much smaller in volume than its original counterpart. For example, when comparing bags of potato chips, we found that the low carb version looked similar to its original version in size. However, on closer look, we saw that there was actually only one-third the amount inside! The bottom line — don't be fooled by food companies. Read labels to compare serving sizes, number of servings and nutritional information between products. Take note of the unit price rather than the total price for a particular product, in case you're comparing a smaller container. Don't let sly sellers keep you from shopping smart!

Food Product	Carbohydrate per Serving	Cost per Package	Cost per Ounce
Peanut Butter	7 g	\$2.39/18 oz	\$0.13
Low Carb Peanut Butter	5 g	\$2.89/16 oz	\$0.18
Pasta	41 g	\$0.99/16 oz	\$0.06
Low Carb Pasta	31 g	\$1.99/12 oz	\$0.17
Alfredo Sauce	3 g	\$1.69/26 oz	\$0.06
Low Carb Alfredo Sauce	2 g	\$2.19/16 oz	\$0.14
Ketchup	4 g	\$1.49/19 oz	\$0.08
Low Carb Ketchup	1 g	\$2.29/18 oz	\$0.13
Onion Recipe Mix	4 g	\$1.45/2 oz	\$0.72
Low Carb Onion Recipe Mix	3 g	\$1.89/1.4 oz	\$1.35
Potato Chips	17 g	\$3.29/13 oz	\$0.25
Low Carb Potato Chips	9 g	\$2.99/6 oz	\$0.50
Pancake Mix	40 g	\$2.09/32 oz	\$0.07
Low Carb Pancake Mix	35 g	\$4.59/13 oz	\$0.35
Plain Bagel	27 g	\$1.85/14 oz	\$0.13
Low Carb Bagel	22 g	\$1.85/10 oz	\$0.18

Source for price comparisons: Hen House Grocery Store, Overland Park, KS; 10/3/04.

This material was funded by USDA's Food Stamp Program through a program awarded by the Kansas Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services (SRS). The Food Stamp Program can help people of all ages with low income buy nutritious foods for a better diet. To find out more, contact your local SRS Service Center or call 1-800-221-5689.

Dining on a Dime's Cooks' Corner

Cranberry Turkey Salad (Serves 4)

Ingredients

2 cups chilled cooked turkey without bones, cut into small pieces
1 large red apple, cored and cut into small pieces
1 small can mandarin oranges, drained
1/4 cup dried cranberries
3 tablespoons walnuts, coarsely chopped
4 cups fresh lettuce, torn into small pieces
1 cup jellied whole-berry cranberry sauce
1/4 cup frozen orange juice concentrate, thawed

Directions

1. In a medium bowl, combine turkey, apple pieces, oranges, cranberries and walnuts. 2. Place lettuce on four dinner plates. 3. In a separate bowl, mix cranberry sauce and orange juice concentrate. 4. Pour juice mixture over turkey mixture and stir gently. 5. Serve salad on lettuce. 6. If desired, serve with whole wheat dinner rolls and low-fat milk. 7. Refrigerate any leftovers within 2 hours. Each serving of salad provides 398 calories, 31 g protein, 5 g fat and 59 g carbohydrate.



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