

News Column for Use Week of 11/4/19

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## **Healthy Eating Tips for the Holidays**

The holidays are coming, and at this time of year I think of gathering with friends and family, and of course enjoying food when we are together. Holiday eating may have you concerned about foods high in fat and calories, or overeating in general. I want to share some tips to help you enjoy the holidays without increasing your waistline.

Making recipes healthier may be easier than you think. Make simple ingredient substitutions or adjustments to create healthier recipes without sacrificing flavor and enjoyment. Many of the traditional foods served during the holidays start out healthy. It's what is added to the traditional foods and how they are prepared that add extra calories and fat. Here are a few healthier holiday eating tips:

- **Reduce sugar;** In baked goods, such as quick breads, cookies, pie fillings, custard, pudding, and fruit crisps, reduce the sugar by one-fourth to one-third. When you use less sugar in recipes, add spices such as cinnamon, cloves, allspice, and nutmeg, or flavorings such as vanilla extract or almond flavoring to enhance the sweetness of the food. Do not reduce sugar in yeast breads, because sugar provides food for the yeast and promotes rising.
- **Be sodium savvy;** Choose fresh or low-sodium versions of products, such as low-sodium soups, broths, soy sauce, canned vegetables, and tomato products. Frozen vegetables are an alternative to canned vegetables. In many recipes salt can be reduced or deleted altogether. When the recipe calls for seasoning salt, such as garlic salt, celery salt, or onion salt, try using herb-only seasoning, such as garlic powder, celery seed, or onion flakes. You could also use finely chopped herbs, garlic, celery, or onions. Do not cut salt out of yeast breads, because salt helps control the rising action of yeast.
- **Increase fiber;** Try using whole-wheat flour, whole-wheat bread, bulgur, whole-wheat pasta, brown rice, oatmeal, whole cornmeal, or barley in recipes and dishes. Substitute whole-wheat flour for half of the all-purpose flour in a recipe. Vegetables are another great way to increase the fiber of dishes, add a variety of vitamins and minerals, and make meals stretch further. Add vegetables to chili, meatloaf, hamburgers, and spaghetti sauce. Add extra vegetables to quiche fillings, casseroles, and salads. Beans such as kidney, pinto, or navy beans are great for soups or stews. Fruits can be added to muffins, pancakes, desserts, and salads.
- **Use healthier cooking techniques;** Try using nonstick pans or spraying pans with nonstick cooking spray to reduce the amount of fat and calories added to baked foods. Choose healthier cooking methods that use less fat, such as baking, broiling, grilling, poaching, steaming, or microwaving.
- **Lower the fat;** Skim excess fat from the top of soups, gravies, and stews. Use skim or low-fat milk instead of whole milk. Choose lean meat, and drain excess fat after cooking. If a recipe calls for regular sour cream or mayonnaise, replace them with reduced-fat versions. For dip recipes, try using plain, low-fat or non-fat yogurt in place of mayonnaise.

Start a tradition. Make your holiday recipes healthier through simple substitutions and adjustments. Enjoy the holidays. If you have a question, contact Sonia Cooper by emailing

[srcooper@ksu.edu](mailto:srcooper@ksu.edu) or calling 785-632-5335. Adjusting Recipes to meet Dietary Guidelines.  
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