

GOOD FOOD BOX



DECEMBER NEWSLETTER

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all!

Eat Smart, stay active, get enough sleep and enjoy a healthy holiday.

Surviving Holiday Eating

The holidays are a time for socializing with friends & family – focus on the occasion, not on the overabundance of food.

With some wise planning, losing weight won't have to be your New Year's resolution!

Follow these survival tips:

- Plan ahead – maintain a basic healthy eating pattern. Eat regular meals including breakfast.
- Let the holiday spirit “move you” – plan 30 minutes of moderate activity daily. This won't just burn calories but will help you de-stress from the holiday bustle – try a family walk, ice skating or any bit of activity you can sneak into your day.
- When invited to a friend's home, take a potted plant, candles or a nice soap instead of candy or sweets.
- As the host, serve plenty of colourful, healthy vegetables & fruits. Add red or green peppers, cherry tomatoes or cranberries to salads or vegetable dishes. Serve a platter of fresh fruit next to a smaller plate of baked goods.
- Help your guests eat mindfully. Put out smaller plates and serve nibbles in smaller dishes.
- When you are planning to go to a holiday party, eat something small before you go. This way you won't be starving when you get there and this will hopefully help you avoid over indulging on appetizers and desserts.
- Take small portions, eat slowly and savour the tastes!
- Alcoholic drinks are loaded with calories & can dehydrate you, so drink in moderation. Plan to have water or soda water with a twist of lemon or lime between each drink & pace yourself.
- Track your eating & activity over the holidays. Dietitians of Canada have an easy to use tool:

EATracker: at www.eatTracker.ca/

Sweet Potatoes (or Yams)

A starchy but sweet tasting root vegetable with orange coloured flesh.

Nutrition: rated very high in nutritional value...rich in complex carbohydrate, fiber, Vitamin C and Beta carotene (Vitamin A nutrient). Among root vegetables, sweet potatoes offer the lowest glycemic index rating; sweet potato digests slowly, causing a gradual rise in blood sugar so you feel satisfied longer.

Simple Ways to prepare Sweet Potatoes:

Wash, scrub well and prick with fork.

Bake in 400° F oven for 45 min or until soft.

Or cut into ¼ inch slices, brush with canola oil & bake 30-35 minutes.

Or Microwave one potato for 5 minutes on high, turning ½ way through cooking.

Let stand 3 minutes.

Serve as a side dish with pork, chicken or turkey.

Their sweet taste requires little added seasoning!

Cranberries

Nutrition: a good source of Vitamin C & health promoting antioxidants.

Storage: keep for several weeks in the refrigerator in the original plastic bag.

Freeze for longer storage.

Before using, rinse and remove any remaining stems or leaves or freeze.

Preparation:

Add fresh or frozen cranberries to muffins, fruit crisps or cobblers.

Traditional Cranberry Sauce:

Combine 4 cups cranberries, 1 ½ cups sugar and 2 cups water in a saucepan. Cover & cook over medium low heat for 10 -15 minutes, until berries are broken.

Cool. Transfer to a bowl.

Refrigerate covered for up to 1 week.

SUPPORTERS OF THE GOOD FOOD BOX



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Turkey Food Safety: *Info adapted from EATRight Ontario*

Frozen turkey: Store the turkey in its original packaging for up to 1 year. For *prestuffed* turkey, cook directly from frozen.

Defrost times:

In the fridge on a tray: 10 hours per kilogram/5 hours per pound.

In a sink covered with cold water (change the water every 45 minutes and keep bird in original wrapping):

2 hours per kilogram/1 hour per pound.

A turkey that is labelled “previously frozen” should never be refrozen, unless it’s already been cooked.

Cooking tips:

Your goal when cooking turkey is to make sure that the bird reaches a high enough cooking temperature to kill harmful bacteria. The slower and lower you cook the turkey, the more opportunity for harmful bacteria to grow. Never cook a turkey at less than 325°F (160°C).

Use a meat thermometer as the most accurate and safest way to check for doneness. The best place to check the temperature is the inner thigh just above the bone (avoid actually touching the bone).

Cooked turkey should reach a temperature of 85°C (185°F).

After dinner, refrigerate leftovers as soon as possible. Do not leave food on counters for longer than 2 hrs. Remove stuffing from turkey.

Store leftovers in the refrigerator for up to 4 days.

Freeze in containers the right size for one meal to make defrosting easy.

Home-style turkey soup Serves 10

Dietitian's tip: Use the turkey leftovers from a holiday meal or family gathering to make a hearty turkey soup.

To limit the sodium content, this recipe uses reduced-sodium chicken broth and unsalted canned tomatoes.

Ingredients:

- 1 turkey carcass
- 6 cups water
- 6 cups reduced-sodium chicken broth
- 4 large onions, 1 quartered and 3 chopped
- 1 cup diced rutabaga or turnip, peeled
- 1 cup chopped celery
- 4 carrots, peeled and cut into thin strips
- 1/4 cup chopped fresh parsley
- 1/4 teaspoon dried thyme
- 1 bay leaf
- 1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1/4 cup pearl barley or rice
- 1 can (14 ounces) unsalted tomatoes
- 1 can (16 ounces) white beans, rinsed and drained
- 1/2 pound leftover light turkey meat, cut into bite-size chunks

Directions:

In a large stockpot, combine the turkey carcass, water, broth and quartered onion. Bring to a boil over high heat.

Reduce heat, cover and simmer for 1 hour.

Strain the mixture, discarding the carcass and onion. Chill the liquid in the refrigerator — overnight, if possible — and skim off the fat from the broth's surface. Return the liquid to the stockpot.

Add the remaining ingredients to the broth mixture. Bring to a simmer and cook, covered, for about 1 hour.

Ladle into individual bowls and serve immediately.

Recipe adapted from Mayo Clinic

RECIPES

Cranberry Surprise

Crust:

- 2 cups (500 mL) graham cracker crumbs
- ½ cup (125 mL) margarine or butter, melted

Filling:

- 2 cups (500mL) 1% or 2% milk
- 1 pkg (4-serving size) vanilla pudding (not instant)
- 2 cups (500 mL) fresh or frozen cranberries, chopped
- 1 large banana
- ½ cup (125 mL) granulated sugar
- ¼ cup (50 mL) chopped nuts (walnuts, pecans or almonds)

Preparation:

Preheat oven to 325° F (160°C)

Crust: Combine graham cracker crumbs & butter.

Press two-thirds of crumb mixture onto bottom of 12-by 8-inch (3 L) baking pan.

Bake in preheated oven for 10 minutes.

Remove pan from oven & let cool on rack.

Filling: Cook milk & vanilla pudding according to package directions; cool for about 15 minutes.

Combine cranberries, banana & sugar; set aside.

Spread cooked pudding over crumb base.

Top with cranberry mixture.

Sprinkle with remaining crumbs & chopped nuts.

Refrigerate for 4-5 hrs.

Serves 12 : per serving : 240 calories

Recipe adapted from; Dietitians of Canada: Cook Great Food

Roasted Sweet Potatoes

4 cups peeled, diced sweet potatoes

1 onion chopped

2 cloves garlic, chopped

3 tbsp olive or canola oil

1 tbsp chopped thyme leaves

1/2 cup pecan halves (optional)

1 tbsp balsamic vinegar

salt and pepper to taste

Preparation: Preheat oven to 425F.

In large bowl, combine potatoes, onion, garlic, oil and thyme.

Toss well to coat. Pour into shallow roasting pan.

Bake, turning occasionally, for 30 minutes or until vegetables are soft and golden brown.

If desired, add pecans. Roast 10 minutes, watching carefully so nuts don't burn.

Drizzle with vinegar; add salt and pepper to taste.

Makes 4 to 6 side servings. Doubles well.

Recipe source: www.ontariosweetpotato.com