



HealthBits

Five Easy Ways to Enjoy More Tasty Holiday Nutrition

December 20, 2010

Calorie-rich treats and overflowing tables can be the norm during holidays. You can still get the nutrition that your body needs. The key is to concentrate on nutrient-rich foods. With bright colors and delicious flavors, nutrient-rich foods are a gift on any holiday table. Calorie for calorie, these stars of the nutrition world have more vitamins, minerals, protein and fiber. This is just what your family needs to maintain weight, enhance health, and reduce stress during this hectic time of year. Here are five easy ways to add nutrient-rich foods to all your seasonal feasts.

Start every day (and holiday) with breakfast.

For a high-energy day, always include protein in your morning meal. Enjoy an egg or two, a serving of low-fat yogurt, a handful of nuts on whole-grain cereal, or some lean meat, like sliced turkey and Swiss on a whole-wheat wrap or bread.

Snack smart throughout the holidays.

Nutrient-rich snacks provide energy, while reducing the tendency to overeat at your next meal. Start with a piece of fresh fruit or some sliced vegetables. Add a serving of protein, like string cheese, a glass of low-fat milk or leftover meats.



Feature festive holiday salads at every meal.

Fruit salads (any combo of canned, dried, frozen or fresh fruit) are delicious any time of day. Green salads, bean salads, and vegetable salads add color and crunch to lunch and dinner (and they make tasty leftovers for super smart snack times).

Pack your holiday breadbasket with nutrition.



The nutrient-rich goodness of whole grains, nuts, seeds and dried fruits makes for tasty breads, rolls and muffins. Bake some at home or check grocery shelves for sunflower whole-wheat bread or bran muffins with raisins and walnuts.

Warm up the holiday with winter vegetables.

Root veggies (sweet potatoes, beets and carrots) and hard winter squashes, like acorn, butternut, pumpkin and spaghetti, are some the least expensive and most nutritious produce options. Enjoy them roasted, mashed and made into soup!



Did You Know... you can microwave squash & sweet potatoes for a fast, nutrient-packed treat?

A speedy, veggie-filled meal

Basic Stir-fry Recipe

3/4 - 1 lb meat, sliced in small pieces
3 cups vegetables (or as desired)
3 tablespoons stir-fry sauce
1 1/2 - 2 tablespoons oil

Heat wok and add oil. When oil is ready, add meat and stir-fry until 80 percent done (until the redness in the meat is gone if using beef, or until chicken turns white). Remove and set aside.

Add vegetables to wok. Add sauce and begin stir-frying, mixing the sauce in with the vegetables. Add the meat, and stir-fry rapidly. When vegetables are tender but not overcooked, remove and serve hot over rice, noodles or other grain if you wish.

Adapted from about.com

An easy, nutrient-packed party dip

Classic Hummus-without Tahini

2 (15 oz.) cans chick peas (garbanzo beans)
2-4 cloves of garlic
1 Tablespoon ground cumin
1/4 cup olive oil
1/4 cup lemon juice
Water for consistency

1. Combine all ingredients in a food processor. Blend until smooth, a few minutes, adding water until desired consistency.

2. For extra flavor, you can add any of the following ingredients, or experiment with some more ideas of your own: black or green olives, artichoke hearts, roasted red peppers, spinach, sundried tomatoes or feta cheese.