

Aging Healthfully Newsletter

Illinois Department on Aging

The holidays are meant for spending time with friends and family and this is often around the dinner table. For some, family and friends live too far away to share a holiday meal with and can only do so by phone.

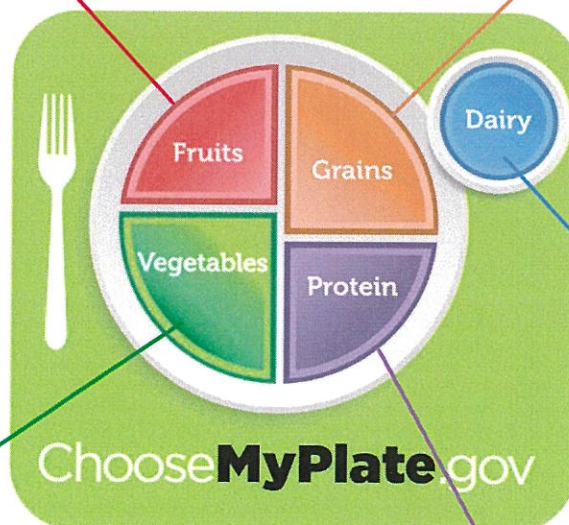
Either way, celebrating the holiday season usually involves indulging in some of your favorite foods and you should! With that said, building a healthy holiday meal is easy to do following the **Meal Pattern/MyPlate** as a guide!

Fruits (1/2 cup)

Fruit salad; fresh cut fruit;
light cranberry salad;
baked/poached pears;
small slice of fruit-based
pie for dessert

Grains (2 oz)

Whole wheat
bread/stuffing, whole
grain dinner rolls, wild
rice or quinoa stuffing,
cheesy brown rice &
broccoli casserole



Vegetables (1 cup)

Mixed garden salad (2 cups
greens = 1 cup equivalent);
roasted/baked/steamed
vegetables (e.g. Brussels
sprouts, green beans,
sweet potatoes); corn
casserole; creamed
spinach

Dairy (1 cup)

1% low-fat milk or
calcium-fortified soy
beverage or orange juice;
plain Greek yogurt w/
cinnamon, apple chunks,
and a drizzle of honey;
8oz tofu (processed with
calcium salt)

Protein (3oz)

White or dark meat
turkey with skin removed;
tempeh, tofu, or roasted
edamame w/ cheese &
mushrooms (Vegetarian);
vegetable quiche

Healthy Holiday Habits



✓ **Stick to Your Normal Routines & Don't Skip Meals**

- Skipping meals to “save up” for one or two large holiday meals is not the best strategy – stick to your usual eating habits and routines - your body will thank you.

✓ **Balance Your Plate During the Holiday Season – Holiday Meals are Often Very High in Carbohydrates**

- Carbohydrates are not “bad” for you, but it is easy to eat more than your body needs.
- Choose better sources of carbohydrates that are high in fiber or take longer to digest (e.g. whole grains, beans, vegetables, most fruits, etc.) and make sure to include lean sources of protein.

✓ **Practice Portion Control**

- Pick your favorite dessert and sides and have smaller portions of them than you normally would.

✓ **Fill up on Fiber from Fruits, Vegetables, and Whole Grains**

- Look for products with at least 2.5gm of fiber/serving on the food label and aim for 25-30gm/day.
- A “*Good Source*” of fiber has 2.5gm-4gm of fiber/serving.
- An “*Excellent Source*” of fiber has 5gm of fiber or more/serving.
- Remember to start slowly when adding more fiber into your diet as well as increasing your fluid intake to help prevent constipation/diarrhea.

✓ **Don't Forget to Exercise** - Physical activities like walking, dancing, yoga, biking, or tai chi can help support both mental and emotional health by:

- Improving your sleep
- Reducing feelings of stress and depression
- Increasing your energy level
- Improving your overall emotional well-being and mood



Cooking Modifications to Cut Down on Fat and Added Sugars

Reducing Fat in Recipes	Reducing Added Sugars in Recipes
Use fat-free, low-sodium broths instead of full sodium broths in recipes.	Using spices or ingredients like cinnamon, nutmeg, cloves, and vanilla can help with adding flavor while cutting back on sugar.
Use fruit purees (apple, mango, peach) instead of oil in baked goods.	Adding fruit to some recipes can add natural sweetness without needing to add sugar.
Cut down on butter/oil where you can (e.g. if a recipe calls for 2 tablespoons only use 1 tablespoon).	Often the sugars in a recipe can be reduced by a third or even by half without affecting the final product.
Try using plain Greek yogurt or low-fat sour cream in creamy dips, mashed potatoes, and casseroles.	Cut the amount of sugar in pie fruit fillings in half (e.g. apple, strawberry, blueberry pies).
Removing the skin before serving turkey can save ~20 calories & ~3gm of fat per serving.	Substitute fresh fruit or spices for sugar-based toppings.



Being Prepared for a Winter Emergency



Seniors face more than just the risk of falling with the heavy snow and ice in the wintertime. For those with certain health conditions or limited mobility, cold temperatures can also be dangerous.

Driveways, sidewalks, neighborhoods, and roads covered with ice may prevent seniors from getting to the grocery store or to their doctor. In addition, being unprepared for pipes freezing and bursting or a winter storm that causes a power outage and loss of heat can become a life-threatening situation for older adults.

Planning ahead can help prevent some of the most serious risks associated with a winter storm or emergency.

Here are 3 steps to take to be prepared this winter:

1. Create an Emergency Kit

- Kit for the home should include emergency blankets, flashlight with extra batteries, manual can opener, battery operated radio, 2-week shelf-stable food supply, 2-week water supply, 1-week medication supply, first aid kit, copies of personal documents (e.g. identification, insurance card, medication information), rock salt for sidewalks, cell phone charger with an extra battery, supplies for pets if applicable (e.g. food, water).
- Kit for your car should include an emergency blanket, gloves, hat, boots, flashlight with batteries, food/water supply, first aid kit, battery operated radio, and cell phone charger.

2. Have an Emergency Action Plan and Share it With Family Members

- The plan should include a designated contact person in the event of a winter storm or emergency. Communication is key!
- Escape routes if there is damage to the home or if sidewalks are not safe to walk on.
- Transportation plans (methods of transportation available and contact information).
- Backup heat source if there is a power outage.
- Backup plan for medical devices that require electricity.
- Plans for what to do if the power goes out (e.g. dress in layers of warm clothes, listen to the weather radio for updates, eat and drink more frequently to maintain body temperature and stay hydrated, and communicating with providers about the situation during the storm).

3. Have an Emergency Contact List

- Post the list close by on the refrigerator or near the phone so it is easy to find in the event of an emergency.
- The Emergency Contact List should include:
 - Designated emergency contacts (at least two people)
 - Emergency service providers (e.g. medical, fire, law enforcement, doctor, and insurance company)
 - Home care providers (e.g. nutrition service providers, care coordinators, etc.)
 - Electric/utilities numbers in the event of a power outage or electrical outage.

Attachments:

- Eating Right for Older Adults
- Christmas Traditions Around the World Trivia (Activity)
- Emotional Benefits of Exercise
- Emergency Preparedness for Seniors
- FEMA Emergency Supply List
- Recipes: Lasagna Soup; Taco Soup

References:

https://www.redcross.org/content/dam/redcross/atg/PDF_s/Preparedness_Disaster_Recovery/Disaster_Preparedness/Disaster_Preparedness_for_Srs-English.revised_7-09.pdf
https://www.nia.nih.gov/health/infographics/emotional-benefits-exercise-feel-good-go4life?utm_source=NIA+Main&utm_campaign=81f0e34d38-20191122_go4life&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_ffe42fdac3-81f0e34d38-18449047

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<https://www2.illinois.gov/aging/CommunityServices/nutrition/Pages/nutrition.aspx>