

York University Staff Association Health and Wellness News and Views

The holiday season typically means more festive occasions for tempting treats, and delicious cocktails, and we haven't even touched our holiday feast yet. A typical holiday meal can mean disaster for your diet, with an average calorie count of more than 2500 for every festive spread you indulge in. Given that 3500 calories equals one extra pound of weight, a few crazy meals, in theory, could turn into a few extra lines on the scale. Is it all worth the snug fitting clothes and the "winter weight blues".

This year a **Holiday Meal Makeover** is definitely in order! So it's time to deck the kitchen with healthier ingredients and lower calorie treats. The trick is to pack the flavour and pull out the fat. Hopefully you can enjoy all of the tasty treats the season has to offer without the guilt.

Here are some yummy alternatives to some traditional appetizers, drinks, and desserts.

Cheers!!!!



All of those holiday toasts can add up by the time the New Year's Eve ball drops. Enjoy a few figure friendly twists on your classic cocktails and during the holiday season and the word diet won't ever reach your New Year's resolution list when January rolls around.

Tonic is one of the easiest of all to mix and complete with your spirit of choice. Tonic water has as many calories and sugar as a coke. A great option is diet tonic. The beauty of diet tonic is that there are a variety of flavours now available.

There are also a large variety of light juices available. For example choose light cranberry juice the next time you choose to toast with a Cape Cod.

Adding lots of ice not only keeps your cocktail cold and refreshing but it also cuts down on calories.

Wine spritzer's are a perfect way to make merry without packing on the pounds. Start with just a splash of wine add a shot of healthy light pomegranate or cranberry juice, both of which are nutrient heavy and calorie light. Finally throw in a touch of soda or sparkling water.

Eggnog is packed full of calories – This is one holiday drink that's better left at the bar! Unless of course you make some serious changes. First skip the heavy cream and choose skim milk and fat free half and half instead. Egg substitute are just as good as the real deal. Now since you have just cut your caloric intake down about 60 calories, feel free to add ¼ cup of brandy or rum for a little kick, or spice it up with a little nutmeg.

Here is a great recipe...

Eggnog

1 ½ cups skim milk,
½ cup fat free half n half,
½ egg substitute,
1 tsp vanilla,
1 packet artificial sweetener.

Combine all ingredients in a shaker or blender. Serve cold or over ice. Garnish with nutmeg.

Appetizer's Anyone?

A picture perfect addition to any holiday spread, this **festive crabmeat pomegranate dip** is low in calories compared with the typical veggie dip. Light mayo is the only ingredient that adds a few fat calories,

otherwise this holiday appi is protien packed and full of flavour.

Festive Crab Spread

8 Oz lump crabmeat, drained.
4 tbsp light mayo
1 tbsp finely chopped scallions tops or chives.
1tbsp fresh lemon or lime juice.
½ cup pomegranate seeds.
Assorted vegetable.

Mix crab meat with mayo, scallions, and juice.
Mound crab dip in the cebtre of a patter, sprinkle with pomegranate seeds. Arrange colourful vegetables.

Pigs in a blanket are a holiday no-no, layden with fat and not a lot o nutritional value. Stuffed Figs wrapped in prosciutto are a delicious and nutritious alternative. Cutting the calorie count and fat contant almost in half.

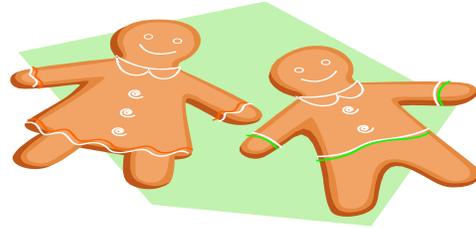
Stuffed Figs

12 servings.
12 large fresh figs (mission or any other fresh variety)
2 oz goat cheese
2 oz thinly sliced prosciutto. Cut into 12 strips
2-3 oz balsomic vinegar

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Cut figs in half but not all the way through. Stuff the fig with a small scoop of goats cheese and press gently to seal. Wrap stuffed fig in a strip of prosiutto to secure cheese, tuck ends of prosiutto under fig. Place figs on a non-stick baking sheet. Drizzle balsomic vinegar. Bake for 8-10 minutes. Serve warm and enoy.

Save Room for Dessert.

What is a holiday celebration with out decadent christmas cookies and treats. While these treats are not exactly lean cuisine they are a step in the right direction.



Whole Grain Gingersnaps

1 cup all purpose flour
1 cup whole wherat flour
1 tbsp ground ginger
1 tsp baiking soda

½ tsp ground cinnamon
½ tsp salt
½ cup sugar
6 tbps transfat free vegetable oil spread
1 large egg
½ cups dark molasses
Sprinkles (optional)

Directions

1. On sheet of waxed paper, combine whole wheat and white flours, ginger, baking soda, cinnamon, and salt.
2. In a large bowl, with mixer on low speed, beat sugar and vegetable oil spread until blended. Increase speed to high, beat until lightg and creamy. Beat in egg and molasses. Reduce speed to llow, beat in flour mixture just until blended. Cover dough with plastic wrap and refrigerate for 1 hour or until easier to handle. (dough will still be slightly sticky)
3. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. With lightly greased hands shape dough into 1 inch balls. Place balls onto baking sheet.
4. Bake cookies 9-10 minutes, or until tops are slightly cracked. (cookies will be very soft) Cool cookies completely.
Enjoy!

Chocolate Chip Christmas Balls

8 tbsp butter softened
¼ cup cream cheese, softened
1/3 cup granulated suger

1/8 tsp salt
1 egg
2 ½ tsp vanilla extract
1 cup all purpose flour
1 cup whole wheat flour
1 12 ounce package miniature semisweet chocolate chips
1 cup confectioners sugar
2/3 tsp fat free milk

Directions

Heat oven to 350°. In a small bowl, beat butter and cream cheese with an electric mixer for 30 seconds. Add granulated sugar and salt. Beat until combined. Beat in egg and 2 tsp of vanilla until combined. Beat in as much all purpose flour and whole wheat flour as you can with the mixer. Stir in any remaining flour. Stir in the chocolate chips. Shape dough into 1 ½-inch ball. Place on ungreased cookie sheet. Bake for about 15 minutes.

For frosting: In a bowl, combine 1 cup confectioners sugar, milk and ½ tsp vanilla. Stir in additional milk 1 tsp at a time, until icing reaches desired consistency. Drizzle over cooled cookies.

With a few minor changes celebration foods can be both healthy and nutritious. We will leave the main dish to you, since you already know to eat the white meat on the bird and go easy on the stuffing and gravy right?



Sooo, this holiday, focus more on giving thanks and wrapping presents for the ones you love, and less on the needle on the scale.

Perhaps the best Yuletide decoration is being wreathed in smiles.

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