

We are invited to a lot of potlucks during the holidays. How can we make our favorite recipes a little healthier?

You can lower fat and calories in some recipes without affecting the flavor or quality. Cookie and candy recipes, however, usually don't turn out when you change the recipe. Instead, make the cookie or candy servings small so people have a "taste." Pare calories from other recipes with these tips:

- Use low-fat or nonfat yogurt in place of sour cream in dips.
- Substitute low-fat for regular cream cheese.
- In holiday breads or brownies, use applesauce in place of half the shortening. For example, if a recipe calls for 1 cup of shortening, use ½ cup of shortening and ½ cup of applesauce.



I am trying to avoid weight gain during the holidays this year, but there's food everywhere! I don't want to miss holiday parties. What can I do?

Try these tips to enjoy the season and maintain your weight:

- Tame your appetite by having a bowl of broth-based soup before you leave home.
- Stand a distance from the serving table, and spend most of your time talking.
- Watch your beverages. They can add lots of calories. Sip on ice water or diet soda instead of punch.
- Give yourself a generous helping of fresh fruits and vegetables.
- Decide in advance how many treats you will have. Many types of cookies contain 100 or more calories each. An extra 100 calories a day can result in a 10-pound weight gain in a year.
- Use a napkin instead of a plate to gather your food at a buffet. That way, you are less likely to choose the higher-fat, higher-calorie "sticky" foods.
- Slow down when eating. Remember, your brain takes at least 20 minutes to get the signal from your stomach that it's full.
- Get regular exercise. If the weather is too cold to walk outside, walk in a mall or public building. Or, turn on some festive holiday music and dance!

Visit www.ag.ndsu.edu/foodwise for more information.

I like to serve colorful cranberry desserts and side dishes, especially during the holidays. Are cranberries a healthy food?

Cranberries provide some vitamin C, vitamin A, fiber and potassium. According to health researchers, cranberries contain some “phytochemicals” (natural plant chemicals) that may help prevent heart disease, cancer, gum disease and ulcers. Drinking cranberry juice also helps prevent urinary tract infections.

Enjoy some cranberries during the holidays and throughout the year. Cranberries are available in several forms: fresh, frozen, dried and canned. Dried cranberries, for example, can be added to muffins, pancakes or snack mixes. Unsweetened cranberries are quite tart, so recipes call for sugar or a naturally sweet fruit, such as apples, oranges or apricots.

Try making this quick and easy cranberry sauce

Rinse fresh cranberries under running water.
Mix 2 cups of fresh cranberries with one cup of sugar and ½ cup of water in a saucepan over medium heat.
Boil gently for 10 minutes and remove from heat.
Skim foam and pour into serving dish.
Serve warm or chilled.

Happy Holidays!

CRAN-APPLE CRISP

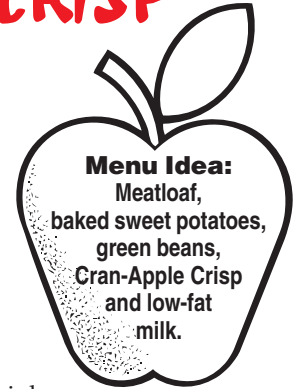
- 4 cored and thinly sliced apples
- 1 (16-ounce) can whole cranberry sauce (or substitute jellied cranberry sauce*)
- 2 tsp. soft margarine, melted
- 1 c. uncooked oatmeal
- ⅓ c. brown sugar
- 1 tsp. cinnamon

Preheat oven to 400 degrees.

Wash apples, remove cores and slice thinly, keeping peel on. In a bowl, combine the cranberries and apples. Pour into an 8-inch by 8-inch pan or baking dish. Combine melted margarine with oatmeal, brown sugar and cinnamon until well blended. Sprinkle over apple/cranberry mixture. Cover and bake for 15 minutes. Uncover and bake 10 more minutes until the topping is crisp and brown. Serve warm or cold.

* If using jellied cranberry sauce, use a fork to mash the jellied sauce, then add sliced apples and mix well.

Makes eight servings. Per serving: 220 calories, 2 grams (g) fat, 52 g carbohydrate and 4 g fiber.



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Contact the local office of the
NDSU Extension Service
for more information
on food and nutrition or
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