



WEEK ONE: THANKSGIVING WEEK

The Thanksgiving holiday is the time of year that we offer thanks for our blessings in life — good health, great friends, a loving family and life itself, just to name a few. Living in America provides us with an abundance of opportunities not accessible to many people in the world. Some of this “abundance” creates an environment of excess throughout the holiday season, which makes balance and moderation a challenge, even for the most committed person. This week’s Thanksgiving issue of ‘Tis the Season to Lighten Up helps you build a foundation for a season of balance, joy and good cheer with a focus on eating well.

A Season of Balance, Joy and Good Cheer: **Eating Well**

We all know that the ability to control our food choices and portion sizes are keys to maintaining our weight during the holiday season. To guide your choices and build a foundation of eating for balance, joy and good cheer, consider these key principles:

- 1. Emphasize foods that come from the earth.** What could be better than fresh wholesome food? Fruits, vegetables, whole grains, tubers, legumes (beans, peas and lentils) and other plant-based foods are the foundation of a balanced diet. If you can dig it or pick it, it’s a good choice... as nature intended.
- 2. Drink alcohol only in moderation, if at all.** Alcohol is easy to come by during the holiday season. Alcohol is loaded with calories, plus it disrupts sleep and can make you feel sluggish the following day. If you drink alcohol, limit your intake to one or two drinks, at most. Instead of alcohol, sip on a sparkling water with a splash of cranberry juice and a slice of lime.
- 3. Choose foods from at least two food groups for each meal and snack.** Start with a whole grain or starch such as whole wheat bread, brown rice or a baked sweet potato. Add a fruit and vegetable such as a mixed greens salad with mandarin oranges or baby carrots, sliced red peppers and sliced apples with low fat dip. Finish with a high.
- 4. Take 15 to 20 minutes each week to plan your meals.** Meal planning doesn’t have to be a chore. Simply take a few minutes each week to think about your daily meals, and then make a list of everything you might need to purchase. Planning ahead helps alleviate the last minute panic of “what’s for dinner?” Save your menus and shopping lists to reuse in the future.
- 5. Eat regularly timed meals and snacks.** Refuel your body about every four hours with light and energizing foods. Fresh fruit and yogurt, pre-cut vegetables and dip, and tuna or string cheese with whole grain crackers are all easy, great options.
- 6. When possible, take at least 20 minutes to eat your meals.** Giving yourself time to eat—rather than quickly and indiscriminately gobbling your food—will encourage mindful eating. Mindful eating is eating in such a way that allows you to use all your senses to explore, savor and taste your food. When you eat mindfully, you will likely consume fewer calories because you’ll be more aware of physical hunger and when you’ve HAD ENOUGH.
- 7. Keep a food record.** Many studies have shown the importance of record keeping in making healthy lifestyle changes. One particular study showed that people who kept a food record during the holiday season were more successful in managing their weight, while those who didn’t keep track gained weight. To begin your own food record, simply get a small notebook and record your daily food intake including the type and amount of food.

The material contained in this Newsletter has been selected to provide general background and useful information regarding maintaining weight or avoiding the cumulative effects of gradual weight gain during the holiday season. It is not intended to be complete or tailored to your specific needs. You should discuss the information, facts and tips with your doctor. You should not engage in physical activity, which may have injury and health risks associated with it, until you confirm with your doctor that it is appropriate for you. If you experience any pain or discomfort, call your doctor. The material contained in this Newsletter is not designed to replace either medical advice or medical treatment.

Using a Pyramid to Eat Well and Find Balance

Food pyramids can guide you in planning healthy, balanced and enjoyable meals. There are plenty of different pyramids to meet your needs. Explore the following Web sites to find a pyramid that meets your and your family's needs:

MyPyramid Steps to a Healthier You

www.mypyramid.gov

Mediterranean Diet Pyramids

www.oldwayspt.org/med_pyramid

Diabetes Food Pyramid

www.diabetes.org/nutrition-and-recipes/nutrition/foodpyramid

Vegetarian Pyramid

www.vrg.org/nutrition/adapyramid.html

Latin American Diet Food Pyramid

www.latinonutrition.org/LatinPyramid

New Soul Food Pyramid

www.soulfoodpyramid.org

Children's Food Guide Pyramid

www.keepkidshealthy.com/nutrition/kids_food_guide_pyramid.html

Highmark Resources for Eating Well

Highmark offers HealthMedia® personally-tailored online programs that can assist you in eating well and maintaining your weight this holiday season.

- HealthMedia®Balance™
- HealthMedia®Nourish™

When you are ready to begin, it only takes a few minutes to get started. Here's how:

1. Go to Highmark's website at www.highmark.com. Choose your service region.
2. Complete the login process, entering your user name and password.
3. Choose the "Your Health" tab and then click on "Improve Your Health."
4. Choose the program in which you wish to enroll.

Keep Moving for Balance, Joy and Good Cheer

While overindulging on Thanksgiving Day won't sabotage long-term weight management efforts, being active throughout the holiday season will help you stay on track to maintain and not gain. It's important to take every opportunity to burn those extra holiday calories so that they don't add up to weight gain.

Consider these five great strategies for getting moving during the Thanksgiving holiday

1. Participate in a local community "Turkey Trot" on Thanksgiving Day, start your day with a brisk walk, or participate in a family touch football game.
2. Round up the family and take a walk before or after the big meal.
3. Enjoy the final days of fall with a hike through the woods or on a local trail.
4. Warm up to the thoughts of winter with a trip to an ice skating rink.
5. Take advantage of shopping trips with an extra lap or two around the mall.

My Goal for Balance, Joy and Good Cheer

Beginning this week and throughout the remainder of the program, we invite you to commit to at least one weekly lifestyle goal that will support balance, joy and good cheer, and, ultimately, your weight.

If now isn't the right time to commit to weekly goals, you will still benefit from participating in 'Tis the Season to Lighten Up. Simply set your goals when the time is right for you.

Considering the Eating Strategies for Balance, Joy and Good Cheer, use the space provided here to define your goal(s) for this coming week.

What is your plan for achieving your goal(s):

Don't forget to self monitor...

Check your weight to see if you are achieving your goal of maintaining, not gaining.

Date: _____

Weight: _____

HOLIDAY RECIPES LIGHTENED UP

Turkey Cutlets with Tangerine-Cranberry Sauce

Number of Servings: 4

- 1 cup fresh or frozen cranberries
- 1 cup reduced-sodium chicken broth
- 1/4 cup frozen tangerine or orange juice concentrate, thawed
- 2 teaspoons grated lemon zest
- 4 turkey cutlets (4 ounces each), halved
- 3 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- 1 tablespoon plus 1 teaspoon olive oil
- 1 tablespoon light brown sugar
- 1 tablespoon dark rum (optional)

1. In a small saucepan, combine the cranberries, chicken broth, tangerine juice concentrate and lemon zest, and bring to a boil over medium-high heat. Reduce the heat to low and simmer, uncovered, while you prepare the turkey.
2. In a shallow bowl, combine the flour, salt and pepper. Dredge the turkey in the seasoned flour; reserve the excess flour.
3. In a large nonstick skillet, heat the oil over medium-high heat. Add the turkey and cook until golden, about 3 minutes per side. Transfer the turkey to a plate and cover loosely to keep warm.
4. Stir in the reserved dredging flour and cook, stirring, until the flour is no longer visible, about 30 seconds. Add the simmering tangerine juice-cranberry mixture, the brown sugar, and rum (if using), and cook until the sauce is slightly thickened, 1 to 2 minutes.
5. Return the turkey to the skillet and turn to coat with the sauce. Cook until heated through, 1 to 2 minutes. Makes 4 servings.

Nutrition Facts Per Serving: 254 calories, 5.4g total fat, 1.4g dietary fiber, 30g protein, 18g carbohydrate, 316mg sodium

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Glazed Brussels Sprouts

Number of Servings: 4

- 6 cups Brussels sprouts
- 2 teaspoons olive oil
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 2 tablespoons granulated sugar
- 1/3 cup red wine vinegar
- 3 tablespoons orange juice
- 1/2 teaspoon thyme
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper

1. With a paring knife, make a small "X" in stem end of each Brussels sprout. In large pot of boiling water, cook sprouts until crisp-tender, about seven minutes. Drain well.
2. Meanwhile, in a large nonstick skillet, heat oil over medium heat. Add garlic and cook, stirring, until tender, about two minutes. Add sugar and swirl in pan until melted, about two minutes.
3. Add vinegar, orange juice, thyme, salt, pepper and drained sprouts, and continue cooking until sprouts are richly glazed, about five minutes.

Nutrition Facts Per Serving: 111 calories, 2.7g total fat, 7.7g dietary fiber, 5g protein, 20g carbohydrate, 307mg sodium

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HOLIDAY RECIPES LIGHTENED UP**Maple-Glazed Sweet Potatoes****Number of Servings: 8**

3 pounds sweet potatoes, peeled and cut into 1-inch chunks

1/2 cup diced dried apricots

1/4 cup diced prunes

1/2 cup apricot nectar

1/2 cup maple syrup

1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice

1 tablespoon unsalted butter

1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon

1/2 teaspoon black pepper

1/4 teaspoon salt

1. Place sweet potatoes in large saucepan with water to cover. Cover and bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce heat to medium and cook until fork-tender, 8 to 10 minutes. Drain in a colander and rinse gently under cold running water.
2. Preheat oven to 400 degrees F. Spray a 7- x 11-inch baking pan with nonstick cooking spray.
3. Place sweet potatoes in prepared baking pan and sprinkle diced apricots and prunes on top.
4. In small saucepan, combine apricot nectar, maple syrup, lemon juice, butter, cinnamon, pepper and salt. Bring just to a simmer over high heat, stirring to blend. Pour mixture evenly over sweet potatoes and fruit.
5. Cover baking pan with foil and bake 30 minutes, basting with juices 2 or 3 times.
6. Uncover and bake 5 to 10 minutes longer, basting 2 or 3 times, until sweet potatoes are glazed.

Nutrition Facts Per Serving: 235 calories, 2g total fat, 4.8g dietary fiber, 3g protein, 54g carbohydrate, 4mg cholesterol, 87mg sodium

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Pumpkin Pie in a Pecan Crust**Number of Servings: 10****Crust:**

1 cup graham cracker crumbs

1 tablespoon dark brown sugar

1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon

1 tablespoon melted unsalted butter

1 tablespoon extra-light olive oil

1/3 cup pecans, finely chopped

Filling:

1 can (15 ounces) unsweetened pumpkin puree

3/4 cup packed light brown sugar

1-1/4 cups evaporated fat-free milk

1 large egg

2 large egg whites

2 tablespoons dark rum, optional

1-1/2 teaspoons ground cinnamon

1/2 teaspoon ground ginger

1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg

1/4 teaspoon salt

1/8 teaspoon ground allspice

1. Make the crust: Preheat the oven to 375°F. In a medium bowl, combine the graham crackers crumbs, dark brown sugar, 1/4 teaspoon cinnamon, butter, oil and pecans. Stir until evenly moistened.
2. Transfer the nut-crust mixture to 9-inch pie plate and press into bottom and up sides of plate.
3. Make the filling: In a large bowl, with an electric mixer, combine the pumpkin, 3/4 cup brown sugar, evaporated milk, whole egg, egg whites, rum, 1-1/2 teaspoons cinnamon, ginger, nutmeg, salt, and allspice, beating until well combined.
4. Set the pie shell on a baking sheet on the oven rack. Pour the pumpkin filling into the pie shell and bake for 50 to 60 minutes, or until a knife inserted 1 inch from the edge comes out clean. Transfer to a wire rack to cool. Serve at room temperature or slightly chilled.

Nutrition Facts Per Serving: 207 calories, 6.5g total fat, 3g dietary fiber, 5g protein, 32g carbohydrate, 172mg sodium

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