The holiday season is already underway! This means lots of fun, festive gatherings with family and friends. The Healthy You for Life team wants you to enjoy this special time of year, but keep in mind that having fun during the holiday season does not have to mean giving up on your healthy lifestyle goals. This newsletter includes tips to help you and you family stay on track this holiday season.



**Healthy Holiday Party Hacks**

1. **Never show up hungry.** Some people think that skipping meals leading up to a holiday party will save them extra calories to enjoy, but this habit almost always leads to over eating. On special event days, be sure to eat regular meals earlier in the day. If you know you're going to be choosing heavier foods at a party, be sure to load up on fruits and vegetables earlier in the day.
2. **Choose your drinks wisely.**  Beverages like egg nog and apple cider may seem festive, but they can easily add lots of extra calories to your holiday meal. Opt for water or other zero calorie drinks so you still have room to enjoy you favorite foods.
3. **Pay attention to your own hunger cues.** Oftentimes we pile too much food on our plates when we are at a celebration. Take a moment to pause in the middle of a meal and check in with how your body is feeling. If you've already sampled your favorite items and your body is starting to feel full, don't feel like you need to finish everything on your plate.
4. **Limit leftovers.** There's no need to feel guilty about indulging on a special occasion, but don't allow that special food to linger around for days.
5. **Bounce Back.** Along the same lines as limiting leftovers, be sure you get back on track with your healthy goals when a celebration is done. After holiday events, you always have the choice to continue overindulging or to go back to choosing healthy foods. Don't let once celebration turn into 3 or 4 or 5 days of excess. If you do wind up overindulging for too long, remember that you can always get back on track. A bad week is no excuse to give up on your healthy goals!

**Healthy Holiday Starters**

Holiday parties are a ton of fun, but they are often filled with lots of high calorie foods that pack a lot of extra fat and sugar. Often times the heaviest foods come before the main meal is even served. Below are some healthier appetizer recipes perfect for holiday gatherings…

**Baked Cocktail Meatballs** (Recipe from <https://healthyrecipesblogs.com>)

Most people love meatballs, but who says they have to be covered in sugary grape jelly and chili sauce to be a holiday hit? Using spices adds a lot of flavor to lean meat, so you can skip the sugary sauce alltogether.

* Olive oil spray
* 1 lb lean ground beef (90% lean)
* 1 teaspoon kosher salt
* 1 teaspoon smoked paprika
* 1 teaspoon dried oregano
* 1 teaspoon garlic powder
* 1 teaspoon onion powder
* ½ teaspoon ground cumin
* ½ teaspoon black pepper

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Line a baking sheet with foil and spray the foil with olive oil spray.
2. In a large bowl, mix the beef with the spices.
3. Form into 24 small balls, each weighing around 20 grams.
4. Place the meatballs on the prepared baking sheet, not touching each other.
5. Bake 10 minutes, until browned. Baste with the pan juices, then transfer to a serving platter and serve.

**Kid-Friendly Bruschetta** (Recipe from www.superhealthykids.com)

This recipe includes fruits and veggies, and is something kids can help their families prepare.

* Whole grain baguette, sliced into 24 slices
* 6 oz low fat cream cheese
* ¼ cup pesto
* 1 cup cherry tomatoes
* 2 Tablespoons olive oil
* 1 cup chopped cranberries
* ¼ cup orange juice
* ¼ cup honey
* ¾ cup pomegranate seeds
* 1 Tablespoone orange zest

Instructions

1. Lightly toast the baguette slices in the oven. Putting the oven on broil and toasting for 2 minutes a side makes them nice and crispy.
2. Spread a thin layer of cream cheese on each slice of bread.
3. On half the slices, spread about a teaspoon of pesto on top of the cream cheese.
4. Slice your cherry tomatoes and toss them in olive oil. Spoon the tomatoes over the pesto.
5. On the other slices of bread with cream cheese, you'll want to prepare your cranberry-pomegranate relish. Place your cranberries, orange juice and honey in a blender or food processor.  Run the food processor a few times, you don't want to make a smoothie! You just want everything chopped.  Remove from food processor and stir in pomegranate seeds.  Taste! If you want it sweeter, drizzle in more honey!
6. Spoon pomegranate mixture over cream cheese and top with orange zest.

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EXTRA HEALTHY TIPS:

* Stay hydrated! Try to drink 8 cups of water every day.
* Stretch out all muscle groups daily
* If going outdoors, wear shoes with good traction to prevent falls on the ice

**Shovel it out!** Though shoveling the snow is not everyone’s favorite task, it can be a great exercise to keep you warm. Reward yourself with a warm drink after you’re done!

**Sock snowball fight!** Ball-up socks into snowball-shape, gather 20 sock snowballs each, and see who can throw the most snowballs at the other competitor!

**Balloon volleyball!** All you need is a couch (the net) and an inflated balloon. Starting at 10 points each, a point is lost if you let the balloon touch the ground.

**CIRCUIT WORKOUT: (Repeat 3x)**

1. Fast feet: For 3 x 30-second intervals, shuffle your feet up and down as fast as you can. Rest for 30 seconds in between each interval.
2. Squat jumps: 15 repetitions. Stand with feet hip-width apart. Bend knees as if you are sitting back into a chair. Keep your knees pushed outwards and keep your chest up. Jump straight up into the air, and land back in the squat.
3. Leg lifts: 10 repetitions. Lay flat on your back with your arms by your side. Keeping your legs straight and together, lift them up to the sky, then slowly lower them back to the floor.
4. Curl-ups: As many repetitions

as possible! Try + complete

one more curl-up each time

you practice.

**Want to trade out those fa-la-la-lazy snow days for energizing activities you can do even on the coldest of winter days?**

**Here are some tips to stay active and healthy in the comfort of your own holiday home:**

Don’t Let the Frost Bite