



VitaMin

Vital health information in a minute!

A healthy head start

Celebrate with healthy eating.

Candied yams. Mashed potatoes with gravy. Cookies. The holiday table is a landscape of temptation. Especially when you try to convince yourself that it's okay to overindulge because you're starting a new health routine in January. There are many ways to enjoy delicious food, and still keep your health and weight in check. Try making these smarter choices:

1. **Apples and applesauce** – Apples are loaded with fiber. Unsweetened applesauce is a tasty way to get fiber without unwanted sugar. Even baked apples with the skin can deliver nutrients that help prevent heart disease.
2. **Cheese** – Hard cheeses like parmigiano-reggiano and aged gouda are an easy way to get calcium and protein. Softer cheeses, like brie, feta and ricotta don't provide the same nutritional value.
3. **Cranberry sauce (unsweetened)** – Cranberries are a great way to kill the bacteria that cause most urinary tract infections. If you need a little sweetness, sprinkle on a little sugar.
4. **Dark chocolate** – Seventy percent dark chocolate is chock full of flavonols, a nutrient that can help lower your cholesterol.
5. **Green beans** – This side-dish staple is naturally low in calories and high in vitamin K, to protect your bones. It's also a good source of vitamins A and C. Just beware of green bean casseroles or other preparations smothered in heavy sauces.
6. **Nuts** – Nuts have heart-healthy unsaturated fat, vitamins, minerals and phytonutrients – a nutrient that promotes health.
7. **Pumpkin pie** – Pumpkin is a vegetable and its orange color is proof of its high level of carotenoids, which help your body produce vitamin A and fight free radicals. Pumpkin is also a good source of potassium and fiber. Just remember – most pies are loaded with sugar, so keep your slice small.

8. **Yams or sweet potatoes** – These tasty root vegetables deliver carotenoids for vitamin A, as well as potassium, vitamin C and fiber. Avoid candied yams or sweet potatoes. You can get just as much flavor by baking them with a bit of brown sugar.

Cook up something healthy

Just a few simple cooking tips can help make your favorite holiday recipes much healthier:

1. Mash white potatoes with low-sodium, fat-free chicken broth instead of milk, butter and salt.
2. Mash sweet potatoes with orange juice instead of butter.
3. Try roasting vegetables to bring out their natural flavor.
4. Prepare your favorite dips with fat-free sour cream or yogurt.
5. Use a gravy separator to skim the fat off of homemade gravy.
6. Substitute butter and margarine with heart-healthy canola oil.
7. Consider lean pork tenderloin for your main dish instead of fattier or saltier meats.
8. Use part-skim or fat-free cheese for lasagna or cheesecake.
9. Bake one indulgent dessert and then offer fresh fruit or dark chocolate-dipped strawberries as an alternative.
10. Prepare bread pudding with fat-free eggnog instead of whole milk for extra flavor.