

## Heart Healthy Tips for Celebrations

### Guidelines for Eating and Celebrations

This resource is designed to help you to cook and eat healthier on special social occasions. Celebrations can be challenging for people who are watching their weight or following a heart healthy diet. Traditional high fat foods are served on these occasions. Occasional indulgences are part of life; the concern is how often you indulge. Take time to eat something before you leave home so that you are not too hungry when you arrive at a party or restaurant. The following tips will help you to prepare healthier foods for celebrations.



### Steps you can take

#### Dips, Salad Dressings and Sauces

- Take a fruit or vegetable platter with low calorie dip as a contribution to any potluck gathering. Make a dip from a combination of low fat yogurt, light mayonnaise, light sour cream, light cream cheese or cottage cheese and seasonings.
- Make your own salad dressing by cutting the oil in half and using a variety of herbs, lemon juice, wine/balsamic vinegar or chicken broth. For creamy dressings use low fat yogurt, buttermilk, or light mayonnaise (see recipe).
- When eating meat or poultry, use cranberry sauce, fruit chutney or salsa instead of gravy.

#### Main Course

- Baste turkey with chicken broth instead of buying a self-basting turkey (these are injected with fat to make them moister).
- Make low-fat gravy (see recipe) or use a low-fat gravy mix.
- Moisten stuffing with broth or canned mushrooms instead of using fat. To increase the fibre content, use brown rice, wild rice, or

100% whole wheat bread. Bake in a casserole dish so that the stuffing won't soak up fatty drippings from the chicken or turkey.

- Make vegetables, grains, and salads the focus of your menu rather than meats and sweets.
- Make mashed potatoes without butter. Instead, use skim milk or broth or light non-hydrogenated margarine. Top with yogurt or low fat sour cream.

## Desserts

- If a recipe calls for cream, substitute milk, low fat evaporated milk or low-fat sour cream.
- Decrease the fat in a recipe to ¼ cup or less. Use oil or non-hydrogenated margarine instead of butter, lard, or shortening, and replace the rest of the fat with mashed fruit or vegetable (applesauce, pumpkin).
- Keep servings of high fat desserts small.
- Offer low fat fruit dessert, such as fruit cobbler, fruit crisp, angel food cake with pureed fruit topping, a brightly coloured fruit salad, or low fat trifle (see recipe).
- Make a graham cracker crumb crust or biscuit crust (using non-hydrogenated margarine) instead of pastry piecrust.

### Yogurt Dressing

1 cup skim milk yogurt	½ tsp sugar
1 clove garlic	½ tsp Worcestershire sauce
1 Tbsp parsley, chopped	½ tsp pepper
2 Tbsp lemon juice	½ tsp salt
½ tsp dill weed	½ tsp red or green pepper
½ tsp dry mustard	

Place all ingredients in a blender or food processor and puree. Pour into airtight container and store in refrigerator for up to ten days. Makes 250 mL (1 cup).

From: Johnson F, Ratner S. *Eating Light and Loving It!* Toronto, ON:

Macmillan Canada, 1998

### Low Fat Gravy

During roasting, use a baster to siphon drippings into a heat-proof glass container sitting in a larger pot of cold water. The fat will float to the top and the juice will settle to the bottom. Remove the top layer of fat with the baster and add broth or vegetable cooking water if a large amount of gravy is needed. Thicken with flour or cornstarch. Season with garlic, minced herbs, salt and pepper.

### Low Fat Trifle

Layer the bottom of a large glass bowl with pieces of angel food cake. Add a layer of fresh (or frozen, thawed and drained) fruit chunks, such as strawberries, bananas, blueberries and kiwi. Then spread a layer of vanilla pudding made with skim milk. Repeat two more layers and top with arranged fruit.



## Additional Resources

HealthLinkBC [www.HealthLinkBC.ca](http://www.HealthLinkBC.ca). Medically approved non-emergency health information and advice.

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