

# Turning Traditional Recipes into Healthier Holiday Fare

When it comes to holiday cooking, many of the family recipes that we make each year are heavy on our stomachs and leave us groaning on the couch. This year, try some of the following ideas and substitutions and see if you can taste the difference. You just might have enough energy to go skating, build a snow sculpture or go for a winter hike after your holiday meal!

## Holiday Baking



- Use whole wheat flour for part of the flour in your recipe for extra fibre and nutrients.
- Replace some of the sugar in recipes with fruit puree like unsweetened applesauce or mashed banana.
- Use more cinnamon, nutmeg or cloves instead of extra sugar.
- Replace up to half the fat with fruit puree. The fruit adds moistness and a subtle fruity flavour.
- In recipes where egg is used as a binder such as cakes and cookies, substitute one tablespoon of ground flaxseed mixed with three tablespoons of warm water for one egg.
- Reduce the amount of baking chocolate with cocoa. Three tablespoons of cocoa powder plus one tablespoon of water equals one square of baking chocolate. Mix the cocoa into the dry ingredients and add the water to the wet ingredients.
- Leave behind the can of frosting and try confectioner's sugar (i.e. icing sugar) instead. A light dusting on cakes and brownies cuts down on fat and calories in a big way!

## The Big Meal

- If you are serving alcohol, also offer a range of non-alcoholic alternatives.
- Roast the turkey on a rack so the fat drips into the pan below as it cooks. When you make the gravy, skim off as much fat as you can from the juices in the pan, use a gravy separator or chill the gravy and then skim off the fat.
- Use 100% whole wheat bread for the stuffing. Add extra vegetables to the stuffing.
- Serve whole wheat and whole grain dinner rolls instead of buttery crescent rolls.
- Use sharp flavoured cheese (e.g. parmesan, aged cheddar) in a recipe and cut the amount you need to use in half.
- Instead of making mashed potatoes with butter and cream, try boiling the potatoes in chicken broth and using the broth to moisten the potatoes as you mash them. Add roasted garlic or simply grate garlic into the mash for an extra bite. For those looking for even more nutrition, mix sweet potatoes and regular potatoes together or make a sweet potato mash by itself!
- When recipes call for cream or evaporated milk, use evaporated skim or 2% milk instead.
- Use light cream cheese instead of regular cream cheese in your dips, spreads and cheesecakes.
- Serve a healthier festive dessert along with, or instead of, the traditional one. Try angel food cake topped with fresh fruit or fruit sauce, a tropical fruit salad, a fruit sorbet, fruit crisp, fresh fruit platter or a big bowl of clementines.

