AMERICAN HEART ASSOCIATION’S
HOLIDAY
Healthy Eating GUIDE

My Heart. My Life.
7272 Greenville Ave.
Dallas, Texas 75231
myheartmylife.org

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First Things First … Know Your Numbers

One of the most common ways people try to lose weight is by reducing calories. But we don’t all need the same amount. Many factors, including age, gender and activity levels, affect how many calories we should consume each day. Use the chart below or visit myplate.gov to find the best calorie range for you or your children.

<table>
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<th>Age (years)</th>
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<td>1000 calories</td>
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<td>1400–1800 calories</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>1800–2600 calories</td>
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<td>Female</td>
<td>1600 calories</td>
<td>1800–2200 calories</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Physically active means this amount of daily moderate to vigorous physical activity totals:

- At least 60 minutes for children (up to age 18)
- At least 30 minutes for adults (18 and older)

Holiday Savvy

The holiday season is about family and food — and all too often, adding a few extra pounds to our waistlines. A great way to avoid this is by increasing your physical activity by going for a family walk after each meal or gathering. Shooting hoops, jumping rope or playing catch are also good family activities. At the end of this booklet, you’ll find ways to stay safe and active in the winter.

Holiday Beverages

The winter season is chock full of delicious dishes and treats, but no one likes the extra calories and added pounds they bring. Use these smart tips on substitutions and choices to enjoy your favorite winter beverages. You’ll stay heart healthy and look good in those family pictures!

Eggnog

- Mix it up. Fill your glass with half to three-quarter parts of low-fat or skim milk, and one part eggnog. You’ll still get the flavor without all the calories.
- Act like a kid. Take out the alcohol. This simple step will reduce the caloric content.
- Cut the fluff. Pass on that big dollop of whipped cream to avoid the extra sugar and fat.
- Find an alternative. This holiday classic has many low-fat or soy versions.

Hot Chocolate

- Skip the heavy stuff. If you order hot chocolate at a restaurant or coffee shop, ask that it be made with low-fat or skim milk, and without the whipped cream.
- Do some research. To make instant hot chocolate at home, look for product packets marked “low-fat” or “low-sugar.” Be sure to add the mix to either low-fat or skim milk, or hot water.
- Go easy on the toppings. Use five to eight mini marshmallows instead of large ones. If using whipped cream, look for low-fat versions and stick to one tablespoon (about a rounded spoonful).
Apple Cider

• Become a fan of labels. When buying cider, check its added sugar content. Many products contain lots of excess sugar, which can increase your calorie intake and cause weight gain. Choose low-sugar and sugar-free options.

• Do it yourself. When making cider, use low-sugar apple juice and a variety of spices and flavors (like cinnamon sticks, cloves, nutmeg and whole cranberries). You’ll keep the flavor while cutting calories.

Cocktails and Other Alcoholic Beverages

• Enjoy mock-tails. Serve nonalcoholic versions of your favorite cocktails to lower the calories. Be sure to check the Nutrition Label, because sometimes alcohol-free products have more added sugar.

• Break it up. To reduce the amount of calorie-laden drinks you consume, drink a glass of water between each beverage. This will help fill your stomach, leaving less room to overindulge.

Eating With the Family

Turkey

• Outsmart the bird. Reach for the lighter pieces of meat; they have fewer calories and less fat than the darker ones. Another way to cut calories is to take off the skin.

• Keep portions in check. A serving size of meat is 3 ounces, about the size of a deck of cards. So, be conscious of how much you put on your plate, and pass on that second helping. If you’re also having another meat, like ham or lamb, take smaller portions of each.

• Stay off the gravy train. Turkey usually comes with gravy, which can add excess fat, calories and sodium. Limit gravy to a tablespoon, and keep it off other items, like the dressing. Cranberry sauce doesn’t contain as much fat or sodium, so it’s a good substitute. Still, because cranberry can contain lots of sugar, limit yourself to ¼ cup.

Dressing

• Call it what it is. Dressing is intended to be a complement to your meal, not an entrée. To keep calories and excess fat in check, aim for ¼ cup (or about half a scoop with a serving spoon).

• Judge it by its cover. If the dressing is filled with fatty meats like sausage and pork, looks greasy or buttery, and is made with white bread or sweet rolls, it may be best to pass. Better options would be dressings that look drier and have whole grain or cornbread, lean meat (or no meat), nuts (like almonds or walnuts), and lots of veggies and fruits (celery, grapes, cranberries, carrots, onions, etc.).

Casseroles

• What’s in it? It’s often hard to know what’s included, but casseroles are usually filled with fat, sugar or sodium (think green bean and sweet potato casserole). Your best bet is to have a spoonful of each and fill your plate with roasted or sautéed veggies and tossed salad instead.

Desserts

• Treat yourself right. The best way to enjoy a sweet without losing control is by sampling, rather than having full servings. For example, have one bite of pie, half a cookie and one small square of fudge. Find a friend or family member who will stick to the sampling rule with you.
Eating at Holiday Work Parties

Appetizers and hors d'oeuvres

• Get involved. There’s usually a list for co-workers to volunteer to bring dishes for the party, so sign up! You can make a heart-healthy item, giving yourself at least one good option to enjoy.

• Come prepared. If the party is during lunch, eat a healthy breakfast followed in midmorning by a high-fiber snack (like an apple or a small handful of almonds). If the party is after work, enjoy a protein-packed lunch like grilled fish or chicken with a salad and then later in the afternoon have another high-fiber snack. If you’re not too hungry when you go to the after-work party, it will be easier to avoid overeating.

• Map it out. Avoid loading up on foods that are fried, buttered or have a lot of cheese and cream. Even though the portions may be small, these fat-laden bites can really pack a punch. Look for fruit, veggies and dip, whole-grain crackers, and baked or grilled items.

Desserts

• Use the buddy system. By having someone to split a dessert with, you can cut the calories and fat in half and avoid being wasteful too. It’s a win-win!

Beverages

• Mix it up. If alcohol is being served, alternate each glass with a glass of water. This will help reduce your thirst while filling your stomach so you’ll consume fewer calories.

• Watch seasonal drinks. Many holiday beverages have so much sugar, they may as well be a dessert. Keep in mind what else you’ve eaten; it may be best to enjoy these drinks on another day.

Making Traditions Healthy

Smart substitutions for your favorite holiday meals

Baking

• Instead of butter, substitute equal parts cinnamon-flavored applesauce.

• Instead of sugar, use a lower-calorie sugar substitute.

• Instead of whole or heavy cream, substitute low-fat or skim milk.

• Instead of using only white flour, use half white and half whole-wheat flour.

• Instead of adding chocolate chips or candies, use dried fruit, like cranberries or cherries.

• Use extracts like vanilla, almond and peppermint to add flavor, instead of sugar or butter.

Cooking

• Use vegetable oils such as olive oil instead of butter.

• Use herbs and spices, like rosemary and cloves, to flavor dishes instead of butter and salt.

• Use whole-grain breads and pastas instead of white.

• Bake, grill or steam vegetables instead of frying.

• Instead of whole milk or heavy cream, substitute low-fat or fat-free/skim milk.

Beverages

• Instead of alcohol in mixed drinks, use club soda.

• Instead of adding sugar to mixed drinks, mix 100 percent juice with water or use freshly squeezed juice, like lime.

• Instead of using heavy cream or whole milk in dairy-based drinks, use low-fat or skim milk.

• Instead of using sugar to sweeten cider, use spices and fruit, like cinnamon, cloves and cranberries.
Don’t Forget to Stay Physically Active!

When the temperature drops, our motivation to be physically active often drops too. Fight the holiday bulge with these tips for keeping physically active when the weather gets chilly.

Build a snowman, fort or castle. By packing, rolling and stacking snow, you’ll give your heart and muscles a good workout.

• **Go sledding.** Running up a snowy hill, sliding down and repeating is a great way to get the whole family physically active. If you don’t have a sled, don’t worry — a cardboard box, trash can lid or skateboard without wheels will work great!

• **Ice skate.** This is a great workout for your legs and heart. You’ll also help strengthen your core, which is engaged when trying to keep you balanced.

• **Shovel the snow.** Someone has to do it, and it’s a great way to get the heart pumping and the other muscles working. But don’t overdo it!

• **Go for an afternoon or evening walk, jog or run — and bring the dog!** As long as you’re dressed warmly (see our tips on dressing warm for cold-weather workouts), any time of day can be enjoyable weather for taking a stroll or a jog. Winter days are shorter, so start early enough to finish before it gets dark.

• **Visit the community center for a game of indoor basketball with friends and family.** This is also a great way to entertain out-of-town guests. Grab a basketball, some jump ropes or a volleyball for a couple hours of fun physical activity!

Tips for Winter Workouts

The change in weather requires adjusting your physical activity. Cold air means different clothing, staying hydrated, and avoiding things like severe weather and getting the sniffles. Here are some tips on how to make the most of your workouts this season.

**Dress the Part**

• **Embrace layering.** To avoid getting overheated, dress in layers. By wearing several light layers while you work out, you can stay comfortable by peeling off layers as your body warms up.

• **Don’t sweat it.** Search for shirts and shorts made of synthetic fabrics that work to “wick” sweat off your skin. Cotton fabrics trap sweat against your skin, causing you to get cold in the open air. Many companies make water-resistant fabrics that can keep you drier.

• **Protect your extremities.** Wear thin gloves and a headband or hat to keep your hands and head warm.

**Stay Hydrated**

It’s a common misconception that you don’t need to drink as much water for winter workouts. To avoid dehydration, drink plenty of fluids before, during and after working out, even if you aren’t thirsty. A good rule of thumb is to drink one cup of water for every 15 minutes of physical activity.
Watch the Weather

In winter, bad weather can strike unexpectedly, causing roads to be iced over and snowy. But staying safe at home doesn’t mean giving up physical activity. Here are some ideas to get your heart pumping at home:

- **Do some lunges.** Take a couple laps around the living room — you’ll engage your thigh and buttock muscles.

- **Try stretching.** Stretch your whole body, focusing on legs, then arms, then abdomen and back.

- **Do pushups and crunches.** Do three sets of 10 each while watching a movie or listening to music. Before you know it, you’ll be done!

- **Climb up and down stairs.** Start by climbing one step at a time, then move up to two.

- **Enjoy workout videos.** Many websites stream workout videos that you can watch for free (see our resources section).

- **Play holiday charades.** Get the whole family involved with a holiday-themed game of charades. Use characters like reindeer (gallop), Santa (riding his sleigh) or elves (working in the toy shop).

Ward Off the Sniffles

- **Cover a cough or sneeze with a tissue instead of your hand.** Remember to throw your tissue away and wash your hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based sanitizer.

- **Wash your hands.** This is one of the best ways to avoid catching a cold or giving one to someone else.

- **Drink up!** Be sure to stay hydrated; drink plenty of water.

- **Get some shut-eye.** Stay a step ahead of illness by getting plenty of sleep (about eight hours a night).

Salad Greens with Baked Pears and Goat Cheese

Serves 4; 1 ½ cups salad greens and 1 stuffed pear half per serving

- ½ ounce soft goat cheese
- 1 ½ tablespoons finely chopped walnuts, dry-roasted
- 2 pears (about 8 ounces each), peeled, halved, and cored
- Cooking spray
- ¼ cup raspberry vinegar
- ¼ cup honey
- ¼ teaspoon ground ginger
- ¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ⅛ teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes
- 6 ounces mixed salad greens (spring greens preferred), torn into bite-size pieces (about 6 cups)

**Cooking Instructions**

Preheat the oven to 400°F.

In a small bowl, stir together the goat cheese and walnuts. Place the pears with the cut side up on a baking sheet. Spoon the goat cheese mixture into the center of each pear half. Lightly spray with cooking spray.

Bake for 20 minutes, or until the pears are just tender.

Meanwhile, in a small bowl, whisk together the remaining ingredients except the salad greens.

Just before serving, arrange the salad greens on plates. Spoon the dressing over the salad greens. Place a warm pear half with the stuffed side up on each serving.

**Cook’s Tip**

To dry-roast nuts, put them in a single layer in a skillet and cook over medium heat for about 4 minutes, or until just fragrant, stirring frequently. Watch carefully so they don’t burn.

**Nutritional Analysis**

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Dietary Exchanges: 1 fruit, 1 ½ carbohydrate, ½ fat
Roasted Turkey Breast with Lime and Herbs
Serves 8; 3 ounces turkey per serving

Ingredients
Cooking spray
1 3½-pound turkey breast half with skin, thawed if frozen
3 tablespoons fresh lime juice
2 tablespoons olive oil
4 medium garlic cloves, minced
1 teaspoon dried oregano, crumbled

½ teaspoon dried tarragon, crumbled
½ teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon red hot-pepper sauce
¼ teaspoon pepper
¼ cup finely snipped fresh parsley

Cooking Instructions
Lightly spray a large glass baking dish with cooking spray. Put the turkey in the
baking dish.

In a small bowl, stir together the remaining
ingredients except the parsley. Once ingredi-
ents are mixed, then stir in the parsley.

Using a tablespoon or your fingers, gently
loosen the skin from the breast meat, creating
a pocket. Being careful to not break the skin,
spoon the parsley mixture as evenly as possible
under the skin. Gently pull the skin over any exposed
meat. Cover tightly with plastic wrap and refrigerate for
8 to 12 hours.

Preheat the oven to 325°F. Remove the plastic wrap from the turkey.

Roast the turkey with the skin side up for 1 hour 30 minutes to 1 hour 45 minutes, or until
a meat thermometer or instant-read thermometer inserted into the thickest part of the breast
registers 170°F and the juices run clear. Transfer to a cutting board. Let stand for 15 minutes
for easier slicing and to let the turkey continue
cooking (the internal temperature will rise at least
5°). Discard the skin before eating the turkey.

Nutritional Analysis
Calories Per Serving 210
Total Fat 4.5 g
Saturated Fat 1.0 g
Trans Fat 0 g
Polyunsaturated Fat .5 g
Monounsaturated Fat 2.5 g
Cholesterol 97 mg
Sodium 226 mg
Carbohydrate 1 mg
Fiber 0 g
Sugar 0 g
Protein 39 g
Dietary Exchanges: 5 very lean meat

Cherry Chocolate Tiramisù
Serves 8; 2 x 4-inch piece per serving

Ingredients
1 cup water
¼ cup sugar
2 teaspoons instant coffee granules
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
6 ounces ladyfingers, separated and torn into ½-inch pieces
8 ounces frozen fat-free whipped topping, thawed in refrigerator

2 tablespoons unsweetened cocoa powder
16 ounces frozen unsweetened pitted dark
chocolates, thawed, undrained
2 tablespoons sugar
1 tablespoon cornstarch
¼ teaspoon almond extract
¼ cup slivered almonds, dry-roasted

Cooking Instructions
In a small bowl, stir together water, ¼ cup sugar, coffee granules, and vanilla until sugar
has dissolved.

To assemble, place ½ of ladyfinger pieces in an 8-inch square baking pan. Stir coffee
mixture and spoon ½ over ladyfingers. Spoon ½ of whipped topping over ladyfingers,
spreading evenly. Using a fine sieve, sprinkle ¼ of cocoa powder over all. Repeat. Cover
with plastic wrap. Refrigerate for 8 hours to 24 hours.

Meanwhile, halve cherries if desired. In a large skillet, stir together cherries and their liquid,
2 tablespoons sugar, and cornstarch until cornstarch is completely dissolved. Bring to a boil
over medium-high heat. Boil for 1 minute, stirring constantly. (A flat spatula works well for
this so you can scrape bottom, where mixture thickens first.) Remove from heat.

Put skillet on a cooling rack. Stir in almond extract. Let mixture
cool completely, about 15 minutes. Refrigerate in a plastic
resealable bag or airtight container until serving time.

To serve, spoon cherry mixture over tiramisù. Sprinkle
with almonds.

Nutritional Analysis
Calories Per Serving 239
Total Fat 2.5 g
Saturated Fat 0 g
Trans Fat 0 g
Polyunsaturated Fat .5 g
Monounsaturated Fat 1.5 g
Cholesterol 25 mg
Sodium 24 mg
Carbohydrate 50 g
Fiber 2 g
Sugar 32 g
Protein 3 g
Dietary Exchanges: 3 other carbohydrate, ½ fat
Resources

For more recipes, nutrition tips and ways to integrate physical activity into your life, visit: myheartmylife.org.

My Heart. My Life.

The American Heart Association’s My Heart. My Life. healthy living platform is a comprehensive health, wellness and fitness initiative that empowers Americans to get healthier. It’s an important part of the American Heart Association’s national goal: to improve the cardiovascular health of all Americans by 20 percent and to reduce deaths from cardiovascular disease and stroke by 20 percent by the year 2020. To help accomplish this goal, the American Heart Association has launched innovative programs in communities across America focused on cooking and eating healthier meals, getting daily exercise, and learning how to plant and nurture a garden. Programs like the American Heart Association Teaching Gardens: an innovative, school-based garden program to help students make better nutrition choices through the hands-on experience of growing healthy foods. Or the American Heart Association Walking Clubs: a national network of walking clubs that helps make physical activity more accessible, fun and rewarding — wherever people are. These programs encourage group participation among children and adults, and draws communities together with the common goal of improving health through fun, engaging activities.