

HEALTH IN OUR HANDS!

The Arkansas State University Wellness Program Newsletter
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Hungry for the Holidays

Holiday Food

The month of November officially kicks off the holiday season. This time of year is full of fun, family, friends, and most importantly food. As most of the time we spend with our family and friends this season revolves around food, it is easy to let ourselves eat differently than the other 10 months of the year. During these two months, family members "once a year" traditional dishes get made and it is hard to pick and choose just a few to splurge on. The purpose of this article is to help navigate eating choices during the holiday season while still allowing yourself to indulge in some of the once a year foods.

Common Holiday Foods

It shouldn't be a surprise what the most commonly consumed foods of the season are. However, what

may be surprising is how many calories these favorite treats hold in each serving. Here are the top 10 holiday dishes and approximately how many calories they contain per servings:

Food	Calories	Serving Size
Corn Bread	152	1 square
Green Bean Casserole	143	1 cup
Collard Greens	35	1 cup
Mashed Potatoes	238	1 cup
Sweet potato Casserole	276	1 cup
Pecan Pie	456	1/8 th of 9 in pie
Dressing	355	1 cup
Black Eyed Peas	196	1 cup
Egg Nog (nonalcoholic)	439	8 oz
Pumpkin Pie	323	1/8 th of 9 in pie

Tips to avoid Overeating

- **Budget Wisely:** For most, the recommended caloric intake is 2,000 calories per day. When eating this time of year, make sure to budget your calories so you do not overdo it. If you plan to splurge in one area, reduce the amount you eat in another to make up the deficit.
- **Take 10 before getting seconds:** Between each plate, take 10 minutes to make sure you are actually still hungry.
- **Don't stand by the food:** When chatting with friends and family, keep at least an arms distance away from the foot tables. Mindlessly snacking can add calories to your diet quickly.
- **Don't go to parties hungry:** Have a small healthy snack before

getting to a dinner party. Overeating happens most when we feel extra hungry

- **Avoid Alcohol:** Alcoholic beverages are often higher in calories than nonalcoholic beverages. If you do choose to indulge in an alcoholic beverage, make sure to not drink on an empty stomach.
- **Make room for Veggies:** Before digging into carb loaded dishes, try eating a plate of veggies beforehand. This will fill your stomach up so you won't feel the need to overeat on the "bad" foods. If you know that there may not be any healthy options, offer to bring a small veggie or fruit tray.
- **Pay attention to what really matters:** Before making a plate, survey all of the available food. After knowing what all is available you can pick and choose based on what you want most.
- **Use smaller dishes:** Using a smaller plate can help trick your mind into thinking you have eaten more than you really have. Instead of using short round glass, try using a tall skinny glass. This will allow you to try your favorite drinks

while cutting down on the amount consumed.

How to stay active during the holiday season

The holidays are often the busiest time of year. Our schedules are full of parties or visiting family. With these extra activities, it may feel like we do not have enough time to exercise. But with all the extra calories consumed this time of year, it may be the most important time to exercise. Here are some tips on how to stay active this holiday season.

- **Plan Ahead:** Look at your schedule each day and set aside a specific time to exercise. If you are going out of town, look up where the nearest running trails are or plan a no equipment workout.
- **Follow the 10 to 20 minute rule:** Don't plan on spending hours in the gym. Instead try the 10-20 minute HITT workout or run. Make your workout short and effective.
- **Make it a family activity** Take family members or friends to the gym or on a run with you. This allows time to be spent together while still

working on your fitness.

- **Take advantage of the season:** This time of year is full of different races whether it is a turkey trot or jingle bell run. This is a festive way to get exercise! Try making a team for these races and invite your family.

References

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Other News

**If you have any suggestions for newsletter topics, please contact Dean Susan Hanrahan at hanrahan@astate.edu.

The Arkansas State University Employee Wellness Newsletter is published monthly during the academic year by the College of Nursing and Health Professions. Health questions can be addressed to Dean Susan Hanrahan, Ph.D., ext. 3112 or hanrahan@astate.edu. Produced by Kayla Leal, graduate student in the College of Nursing and Health Professions, Physical Therapy Program.