

ON TRACK WITH BARIX

Support to Keep You On Track With a Healthful Lifestyle



You've made big strides all year to incorporate healthier eating, regular exercise and new coping skills. Here come the holidays—rather than take a recess from your new lifestyle, embrace the opportunity to experience the joys of the season in a new and improved way. With some healthier ingredients, new recipes, solid party and workplace strategies, and perhaps even some new traditions, you can enjoy all the season has to offer and feel great.

No matter what the situation, have a strategy, stick with it, and enjoy!

ATTENDING A PARTY OR FAMILY GATHERING

- Take a no-added-sugar treat to share. You'll have something to enjoy that doesn't blow your eating plan.
- Limit the number of food items you choose to eat. Fewer food items on your plate means you'll eat less.
- Don't skip meals with the thought of saving up calories; you'll eat more than if you keep to your typical eating schedule.
- If you are consuming alcohol, alternate with a glass of water to make sure you don't overdo.

THE HOLIDAY SEASON— New & Improved

- Pour a calorie-free drink in a pretty glass—don't count on your hostess to have your favorite drink—take your own.
- Sometimes just a bite is all you really need. Keep it to just a bite by snitching from someone else or take a bite and put your napkin over the rest.
- Focus on people, not food.

HOSTING A FAMILY GATHERING

- Start or focus on traditions that don't involve food such as playing games, taking a walk together, making holiday wreaths, decorating gingerbread houses, setting up karaoke equipment and entertaining each other, or serving a holiday meal at a shelter.
- Set a menu, find healthy recipes and then ask others to pick one of the recipes to prepare and bring—the entire meal will be as healthy as possible.
- Be sure to have plenty of low-calorie holiday beverages for your friends and family to enjoy.
- Prepare favorite dishes by using ingredients/methods that result in dishes that are lower in fat, sugar and calories. These little changes make a big difference.

Gratitude unlocks the fullness of life. It turns what we have into enough, and more. It turns denial into acceptance, chaos to order, confusion to clarity. It can turn a meal into a feast, a house into a home, a stranger into a friend. Gratitude makes sense of our past, brings peace for today and creates a vision for tomorrow.

Melody Beattie

- o Use a gravy separator to skim the fat off drippings before making gravy. This simple step saves a whopping 56 gm of fat and 504 calories per cup. Another method is to freeze drippings for 15 minutes and skim fat off the top. You can also make gravy with fat-free turkey broth in place of the drippings.
- o Take the skin off of the turkey after cooking and enjoy the white meat.
- o Use skim milk and/or low-fat chicken broth in place of whole milk and butter in mashed potatoes.
- o Make stuffing in a pan rather than stuffing the bird, using low-fat, low-sodium broth.



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- o Make dips with nonfat sour cream or nonfat plain Geek yogurt in place of regular sour to save 35-40 calories an ounce.



- o Instead of serving candied yams (215 calories per half-cup serving), use oven-roasted sweet potatoes. Brushed with a little olive oil, they have about 75 calories per serving. Another alternative is to use Splenda, stevia or sugar-free maple syrup in place of brown sugar.

- o Make cranberry relish with a sugar sub for a low-calorie (25 calories for 1/3 cup) treat.

- o In place of regular cream of mushroom soup, use low-fat or fat-free soup for green bean casserole. Top the casserole with crushed almonds in place of fried onions. Better yet, in place of the casserole, steam fresh green beans and sprinkle them with slivered almonds before serving.

- o Make faux eggnog—blend together until smooth 4 bananas, 1-1/2 cups skim milk 1-1/2 cups plain nonfat yogurt, and 1/4 teaspoon rum extract. Pour into glasses and top with a sprinkle of nutmeg.

AT THE OFFICE

- Take no-added-sugar treats to share with co-workers for cookie exchanges, pot luck luncheons, or just because.
- Keep healthy snacks on hand to enjoy when the break room fills up with the sugary stuff.
- Steer clear of where the goodies are kept. Out of sight is out of mind.

- Start “non-food” holiday activities like Friday trivia and the winner gets a lottery ticket.
- Volunteer as a group to “adopt” a family for the holiday. This common bond of focusing on someone else’s needs may help you to work together on other projects too.

SHOPPING

- Wear a pedometer and keep track of your steps. Shoot for at least 10,000 steps a day. Hit your goal by doing at least some of your shopping at stores rather than online.
- Don’t skip meals and take a healthy snack or two with you; being famished makes it harder to resist mall indulgences. A portion of almonds or a protein bar work great for this circumstance.
- Keep shopping stress to a minimum by making a list, keeping it simple, and buying items on sale.
- Consider gifts that help others to live a healthy lifestyle--a yoga mat, an olive oil sprayer or mister, a massage gift certificate, a fruit basket, a pedometer, a subscription to a health magazine, or other health-inspiring gifts.

EXERCISE

- The hardest part of exercise is establishing a routine. If you’ve already done that, do your best to keep it up throughout the holiday season.
- Exercise helps to reduce holiday stress, helps you to sleep better, and keeps your calorie balance in line.
- If you don’t have time for a trip to the gym, work in a 15-minute brisk walk twice a day.





Sweet Potato & Apple Casserole

- 2 medium sweet potatoes
- 1 1/2 tablespoons unsalted butter, softened
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/4 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1/8 teaspoon ground allspice
- 3 Granny Smith apples, peeled, cored, and cut into 1/2-inch rings
- 2 tablespoons sugar-free maple syrup

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Place the sweet potatoes on a piece of aluminum foil and roast until they can be easily pierced with a fork, about 1 hour. Let cool slightly. Trim the ends and pull off the peels; slice into 1/2-inch rounds.

Coat a small (3-1/2-quart) casserole dish with half the butter. In a bowl, stir together the cinnamon, ginger, and allspice. Place 1/2 of the apple rings in the dish, top with 1/2 of the sweet potatoes, 1/2 of the spice mixture and 1/2 of the syrup. Repeat and dot the top with the remaining butter.

Cover and bake until the apples are very tender, about 45 minutes. Makes 6 servings.

Nutrition information per serving: 111 calories, 1 gram protein, 22 grams carbohydrate, 3 grams fat.

Eggnog

- 1 1/2 cups skim milk
- 1/2 cup fat-free half-and-half
- 1/2 cup pasteurized egg substitute
- 1 tsp vanilla
- 1 packet Splenda
- 1/4 cup brandy or rum (optional)
- nutmeg

Combine all ingredients in a shaker or blender. Pour into glasses and garnish with nutmeg. Makes 4 servings.

Nutrition information per serving (without optional ingredients): 64 calories, 7 grams protein, 8 grams carbohydrate, 0.5 grams fat, 144 mg sodium.

Crabmeat Spread

Makes 16 appetizer servings

- 8 oz lump crabmeat, drained
- 4 tbsp light mayonnaise
- 1 tbsp finely chopped green onion
- 1 tbsp lime juice
- 1/2 cup pomegranate seeds

Mix crab with mayonnaise, green onion and lime juice. Mound in the center of a platter and sprinkle with pomegranate seeds. Serve with cut vegetables arranged on platter. Makes 16 servings.

Nutrition information per serving: 26 calories, 3 gram protein, 1 gram fat, 1 gram carbohydrate, 70 mg sodium.

Light Artichoke Dip

- 1 15-ounce can artichoke hearts in water, rinsed and drained
- 3/4 cup cannellini beans, rinsed and drained
- 1/4 cup chopped frozen spinach, thawed and drained well
- 2 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese
- 2 tablespoons reduced-fat sour cream
- 2 tablespoons part-skim ricotta
- 1/2 teaspoon olive oil
- 1/8 teaspoon garlic powder

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Combine all ingredients in a food processor and pulse until it reaches the consistency of bean dip.

Spread mixture in a shallow 8-inch ovenproof serving dish and bake until bubbling, about 30 minutes. Serve warm with pita chips or cut veggies. Makes 6 servings.

Nutrition information per serving: 68 calories, 5 grams protein, 9 grams carbohydrate, 2 grams fat.

Pumpkin Dip

- 3/4 cup (6 ounces) 1/3-less-fat cream cheese, softened
- 1/4 cup Splenda
- 1/2 cup canned pumpkin
- 1 tablespoon sugar-free maple syrup
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon

Combine all ingredients in a medium bowl or blender and mix until smooth. Cover and chill 30 minutes before serving. Serve the dip with peeled apple slices, banana slices, or cinnamon pita chips. Makes 12 servings.

Nutrition information per serving: 40 calories, 1 gram protein, 3 grams fat, 2 grams carbohydrate, 63 mg sodium.